



ALIEN WORLDS

3 X the fun!

Frontier/Qwak/Magic Boy + MORE!



Get lost in space ...

Elite!

Frontier!

Savage

A game we forgot!

A musical!

And more....

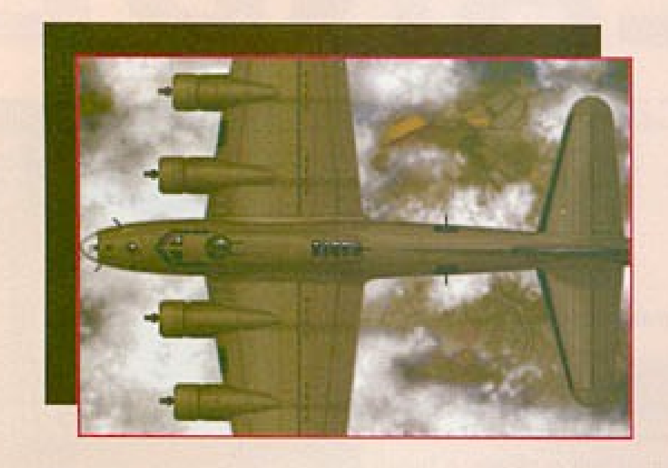
B17

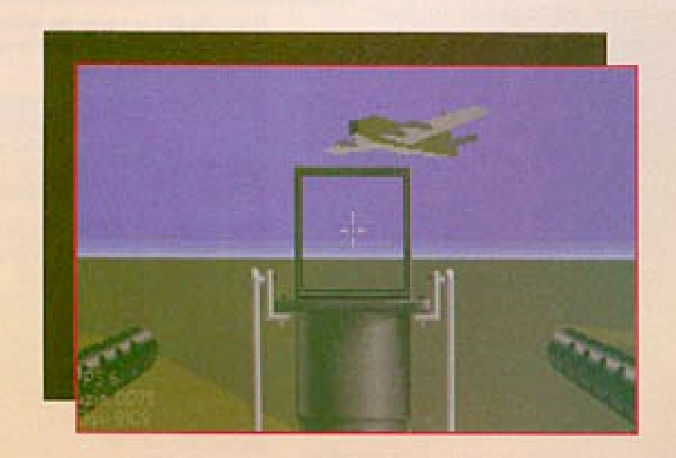
B17 FLYING FORTRESS



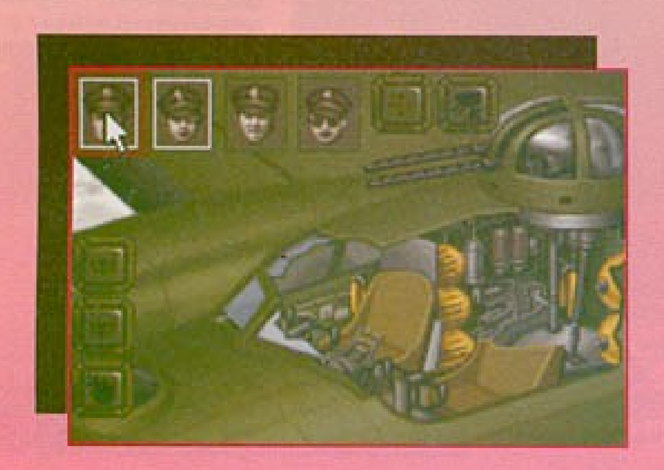
MICRO PROSE











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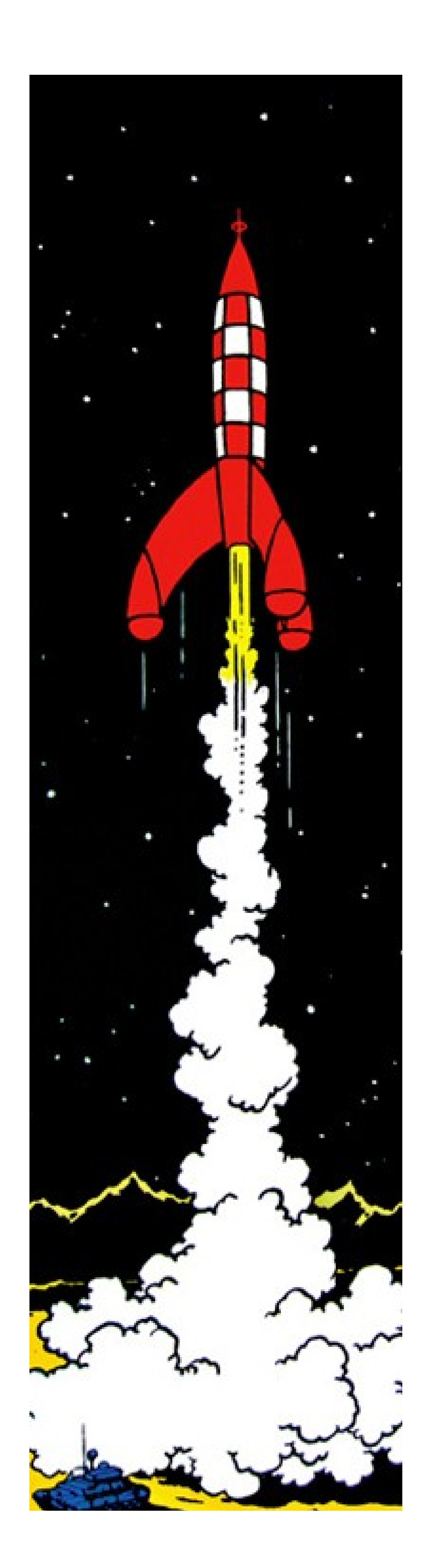
Of all the Tin Tin books I ever owned and read, the two stand out favourites from my childhood memory would have to be Tin Tin 'Destination Moon' and 'Explorers on the moon', an adventure so big it spanned over two books instead of the usual one. From a young age, I have always loved anything Sci-Fi related incorporating space travel, so from Star Wars to Space Balls I can never get enough, and that is probably why I always jump excitedly at the opportunity to play a decent space game.

As far as space games go you cannot get much bigger or more culturally important to the gaming world than Elite, and you will find both the original (for Amiga) and it's sequel Frontier inside this issue along with a rolling demo of Frontier's great introduction on our cover disk. We also review Savage, a game so bonkers and out of this world that it might as well be classed as a space game (the creators were probably spaced out while making it!). Also, there's the game we said we reviewed on last month's original cover and then completely forgot about, so we finally get around to reviewing Final Fight. Is the review worth the wait? Is the game actually any good? Unlike Final Fantasy which spawned a million sequels, Final Fight was, well... the final... so that might give a clue.

This issue's Bleeding Eyes takes a step back from the epileptic fit inducing strobe lights and mind melting graphics, and instead invites you to close your eyes and lose yourself in the audio pleasures of music disks! While the Amiga was extremely good at visuals for it's time, it also had equally impressive audio capabilities as well leaving behind a world of bleeps and crunchy voice samples which you could not really understand, and replacing them with crisp sounding real recorded instruments and clear vocals turning every bedroom across the world into a recording studio. Join us in our audio adventures as we feebly try to explain what they sound like using only words, grunts and pointing our fingers madly at the screen.

Finally, you may notice a few less grammar and spelling errors this issue. No, I have not gone back to school and magically over night improved my literature skills. No, this is all thanks to Codetapper who I was driving insane with my constant errors, so I finally gave in to his requests to have him proof read and correct any errors starting from this issue. A really big thanks goes out to him for this along with his tireless efforts to upload each issue to the Amiga Magazine Rack website each issue! Thanks!

Mark Stanner
Space cadet and editor of 880 Gamer



880 contents

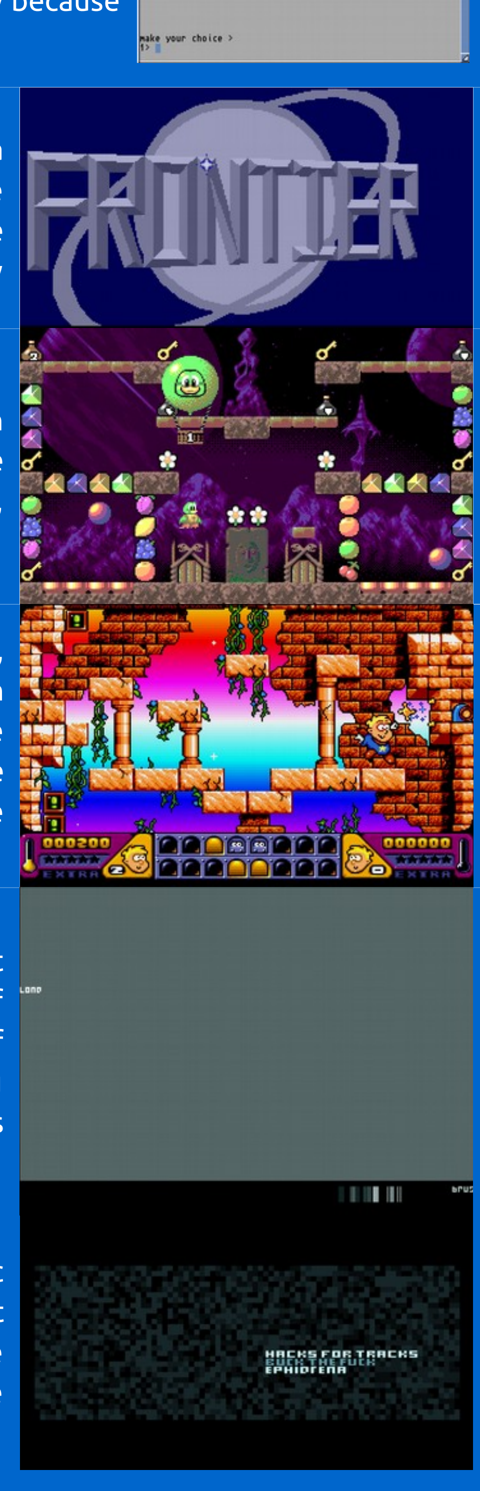
880 cover disc



It's an old school *echo* edition... check out that text!



To truly capture the spirit of classic PD disks, and mostly because our disk compiler is way too lazy to make any effort at all, we present our 'echo' edition cover disk. Anyone who has ever played with Startup-sequence's would know what this is about. Basically, its why the menu looks extremely dull, simplistic, and consisting of only text, but don't let that spoil the party because there are some good times to be had here! Check these out!



Frontier (OCS / AGA)

This is a rolling demo from the introduction of Frontier which gives a very small glimpse into the world of Frontier. Or should that be the universe of... either way, this will give you a taste of what the game looks like, and if you like it you can rush out and buy it.. if it's on eBay or something..

Qwak (OCS / AGA)

This little gem of a game from Team 17 returns us back to a time when simple arcade games were rampant on the Amiga, combining cute simple visuals and sounds with addictive simple game play. Shoot eggs, eat fruit and collect keys!

Magic Boy (OCS / AGA)

With each level full of nasty creatures, it's your mission to shoot them, bag them, and collect them... a bit like Pokemon you need to catch them all! But minus the whole Pikachu thing, so immediately this game is 100% less annoying! Magic Boy may be just another platform game among the crowd, but it looks gorgeous and I can fully relate to the lead character.. that is the whole beer belly and no chin thing.

BRUS – Music demo (Expanded AGA)

Proving you do not need gigabytes of storage space to create great sounding music, Brus is a music demo that pushes the boundaries of what is possible in only 4k of space! Oddly though, you need a stack of memory and AGA to actually make that 4k of code work, but if you have it then you will be able to experience the unique sound of Brus which is also featured in Bleeding Eyes this issue!

Hacks for Tracks (Expanded AGA)

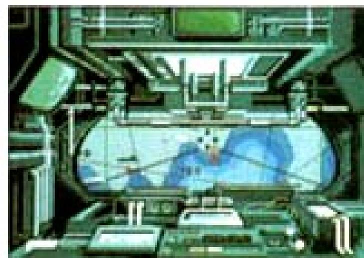
Since we still had space, we decided to include the other 4k music demo from this issue's Bleeding Eyes musical special. Again, don't expect much graphical excitement as music is the name of the game here, and again you need some horsepower to get it going. Unique sounding, Hacks for Tracks is a must for scene demo lovers out there!











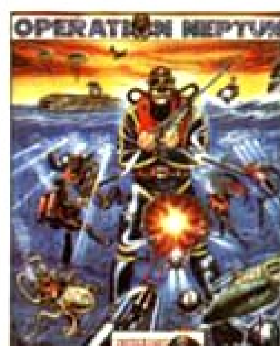
The tranquil surface of the Pacific Ocean belies the battle of wits taking place in the world's last unexplored territory. A perfect hiding-place for a determined enemy, or is it? Your jet-bike and technologically advanced bathyscaphe should help, but there are still the enemy bases to destroy, lines of communication to be knocked out, and the natural predators of the deep just waiting for a tasty snack at the first sniff of blood! So check your oxygen supply, and dive, dive, dive...

Atari ST, PC, Amiga £24.95
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INFOGRAMES, MITRE HOUSE, ABBEY ROAD, ENFIELD, MIDDLESEX, EN1 2RQ.







880 Beast update

With E3 now over, many of you may have been to distracted with all the big budget and flashy announcements (ok, I admit it, Final Fantasy 7 remake got me a little excited, and robot dinosaurs.. sweeet!) to have notice our beloved Amiga classic remake Shadow of the Beast made another appearance after it's announcement last year, and this time they had actual live gameplay to show off.

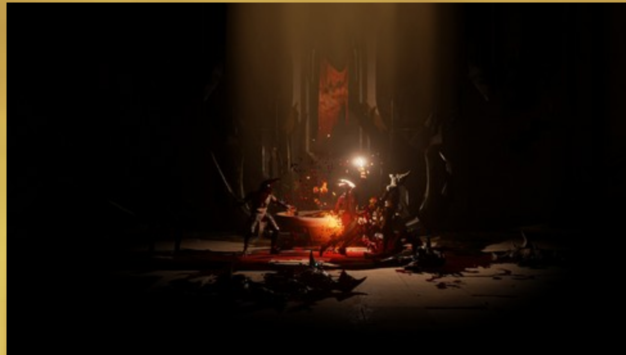
The first thing that struck me about this new addition to the franchise is not the beautiful visuals, nor the completely over the top gore and blood. No, what struck me the most was the passion and over flowing enthusiasm from the founder of Heavy Spectrum Matt Birch who is heading up the development of this game with his small team, and his emotions from the original game that are bubbling over into this new iteration. To be honest, when I first heard of the Shadow remake I was a little unsure given the small and somewhat unproven development team, however after seeing what they have created from this passion I now have renewed enthusiasm myself and can't wait until the final game is ready!

This remake is only for the Playstation 4 which is not surprising given Sony would have picked up the rights for the franchise when they purchased Psygnosis back in the 90's, so do not expect to see this coming to any other platforms any time soon. Personally I am OK with this as it allows the developer to concentrate on the single hardware platform and thus not end up having a generic and average looking game (Flashback remake anybody?). Housemarque did this with the Super Stardust remake and that turned out to be fantastic!

The gameplay retains the 2D platform style working on a single plane in a 3D environment, however the camera is moved around a lot so the game does not feel flat or rigid. Sometimes this movement is subtle panning as you run while other times it is fast and changing angles zooming right in during combat, and then when a small cinematic cut scene take place, the camera completely breaks free, moving around to show off the environments. I have to say it's all done very good while retaining some of the parallax scrolling feel from the original game, bringing it into the 3D world. Speaking of the environments, the level they showed at E3 was the same from the original teaser with an alien wind swept desert like landscape that looks wonderful and almost like something you would have seen on the game's box art. Other levels to come are promised to also be visually rich while keeping with the diverse and vastly different environments of the original.



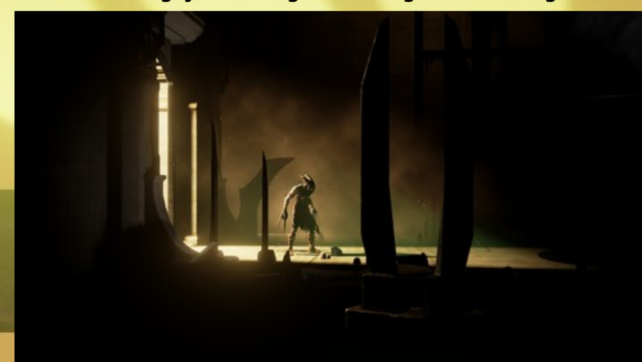
That's either blood, or he is throwing up. Either way, ouch!



Moody lighting, perfect for more blood splattering!



I think the guy on the right is having second thoughts...



Can someone just pay the power bill so we can turn the lights on



Just stopping in the steel works to get some new arm blades

If you have not worked it out yet, this is not a direct remake of Shadow, but more a re-imagining of the game and a continuation of the franchise. While there are similarities between the games, a lot has happened in 25 years of game development and thus simply remaking the original in 3D would not be very appealing. All the levels are original to this game and while combat is present and similar to the original, it has now had it's dial turned up to maximum with a very brutal and surprisingly gory style. Featuring more blood than Mortal Kombat, I almost feel perhaps they have gone a little too far with the gore level with the ground becoming soaked in a red crimson river of blood, and splashes of blood also appearing on the screen for some more brutal attacks. Combat is still very much hand to hand, relying on perfecting your timing to ensure success, while introducing some more depth with combos and special moves which will hopefully prevent the game from feeling too repetitive. Some boss-like creatures make for some impressive highlights which were also shown in the demonstration.

Overall Shadow of the Beast is looking to be coming along very nicely. I still have some concerns over the focus on combat which I worry will make the game feel a little repetitive and grinding as you work your way through, but after seeing it in action I am feeling a lot more positive about this new version and even with all the big flashy announcements for big budget games during E3, I have to admit this is now one of the games I am actually most eager to experience! With such a small team working feverishly on the game, a release date is yet to be announced, but hopefully they take their time and do not rush this out to release so the game receives the polish and detail it rightly deserves! Bring on the beast!



Karaoke night at club Shadow.

Our hero accidentally stumbles into Superman's ice fortress

I know I asked for my steak well done, but this is a little over the top don't you think?

Beautiful scenery... sun set... time to strike a pose!

Game On!

Space, the final frontier...

It's game review time, so set the warp drive to factor 10 and hold on to your sick bags because it's going to be a heck of a ride!

- The First rule of 880 Gamer is no one can hear you scream in space, or feebly laugh at our lame jokes!
- Games are played in emulation and not on real Amigas. This is to judge a game on it's own merits and not the limitations of long load times, never-ending disk swaps (I'm looking at you Street Fighter II) and for all those whiz bang 3D games that were just never going to run even on the most powerful machines (COUGH!... Alien Breed 3D 2 COUGH!)
- The release date will be taken into consideration when reviewing, since games advanced in leaps and bounds both graphically and sonically year on year, but if we think it looks crap we are still going to say it!
- If there are multiple versions available (e.g. A500 / A1200) then each will be compared based on the single review and differences in scores awarded based on each version.
- All games are played on an evil kitten fuelled PC responsible for the death of the Amiga, although we lessen the evil by using penguin friendly Ubuntu with FS-UAE.
- And what about fabulous prizes I hear you ask? How about...



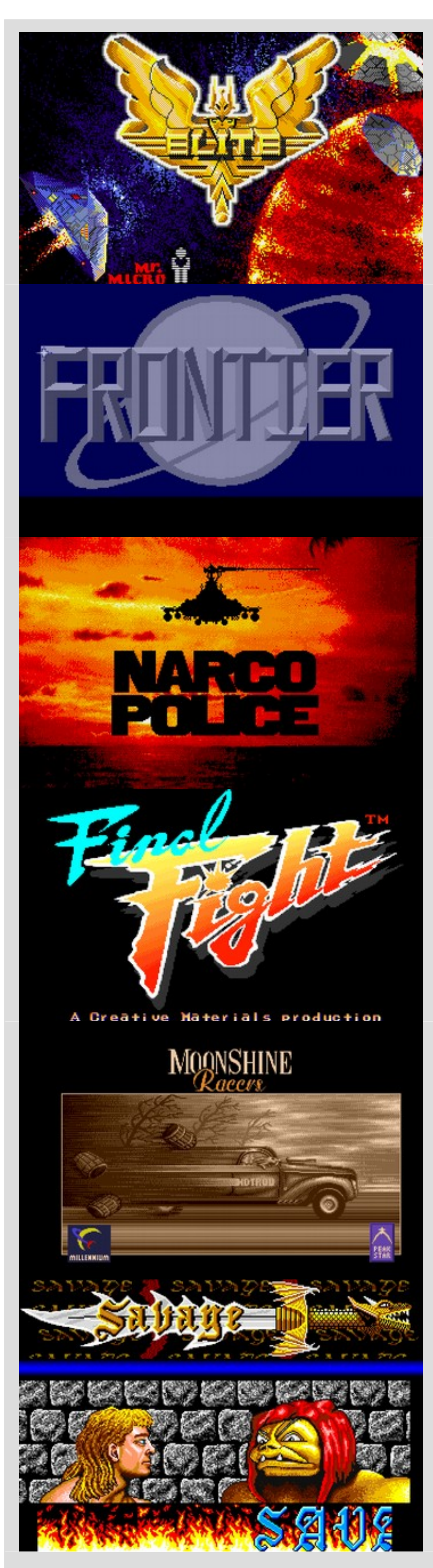
If it's brilliant and scores 90% or higher, then we break out the big gold bars! Twice as bright and yellow than our solar systems sun, our gold disc award is so big it has it's on planetary system!



If its still a decent play with a score of 80% or higher then it is still worthy of some silver. So bright and reflective, NASA once asked to borrow it for repairs to the Hubble telescope's mirror!

Game On!

... these are the voyages of 880 Gamer...



Space traders

The year was 1984, a time when games were generally simplistic and of very little depth, but in the month of September, David Braben and Ian Bell unleashed Elite which challenged the very concept of computer games, giving us a procedurally generated universe to explore, trade and fight in with no overall aim or goal. It was the first true 'sandbox' open world game where you could go anywhere and do anything making your own story as you explored.

Four years later the game was ported to the Amiga taking advantage of the additional graphical and sound capabilities, and then finally almost 10 years after the original, Frontier – Elite II was released in 1993 moving the genre to a whole new level, introducing missions and detailed planetary systems. Shortly after this in 1995 a direct sequel to Frontier was also released called 'First Encounters' which also introduced some story based missions.

Then there was the deathly silence from the vacuum of space. The gaming world was overrun by big publishers looking for profits churning out first person shooter after first person shooter. So ambitious were these procedurally generated games that no one since had really tried to challenge them or further the experience.

Then, thanks to the recent resurgence of independent publishers and the desire to once again create unique and ambitious games, we have finally been blessed with a new Elite game some 30 years after the original titled Elite Dangerous, along with other large scale procedurally generated games on the horizon like No Man's Sky. It is an exciting time indeed, and what better way to celebrate this than revisiting both the original version on the Amiga and it's awe inspiring sequel to see where it all began, and see if we can't make a few space bucks along the way trading some slaves and drugs!

The Elite history timeline...



1984 – Elite (BBC Micro)

1988 – Elite (Amiga)

1993 - Frontier Elite II



1995 – Frontier First Encounters (AKA Elite III)

2014 – Elite Dangerous (ongoing development)

- A500
- 1988
- Firebird

Admitting you have a problem is the first step to recovery, so without making up any more excuses, here I go.

Hi everyone, my name is Mark ... "*hi Mark*" ... ***takes deep breath*** It's been many years now and no matter how many times I have tried... I just don't seem to be able to find Elite much fun... ***gasps and murmurs from the crowd*** followed by shrieks and a thud as someone in the back row faints from shock. ***Sigh***... this is going to be a tough review...

To say Elite is an important game in the history of video games is somewhat of an understatement. In a time when games were normally quite simple existing in very limited or small worlds, Elite took the ground-breaking idea of using procedurally generated worlds, and then handed us a whole universe to explore. Furthermore when you started the game you were not presented with any story or even any objectives to complete, it simply throws you into a space station with your trusty Cobra MK III spaceship and some credits to buy whatever you want from the local space market. For the first time, we had a game that made you feel extremely small and insignificant in the universe that opened our eyes to the joys of space exploration and trading. In essence it was the first open-world sand box game where you can set out in any direction and play in any way you want. Want to concentrate on trading? Then you can grab a pen and paper and start writing down the prices at each star port you visit to find the best profit. Want to set out to destroy all that approach you as a fearsome space pirate? Go check out the range of ships to find one best suited to combat and start upgrading its arsenal to create the ultimate fighter. Or do you want to just set out to explore the universe and discover new species as the next captain Kirk? Your destiny in the game is guided by you and you alone, and not the game.

An auto launcher, but no inbuilt auto landing. Go figure?

Zooooooom... speeeeeeeeeeeed!

Hyperspace, a bit like Doctor Who, but on a budget!

Everywhere you go there are green planets and yellow stars

The core of Elite is trading and you can trade in a good assortment of commodities such as minerals and gems, to wine and weapons. The price of these is normally driven by the local planet's economy, for example an industrial planet that has a high level of manufacturing will have cheap computers and other manufactured goods, while oppositely agricultural planets will sell fruit and vegetables at a good price, so buying these goods at cheap prices and taking them to planets that do not produce them will land you a tidy little profit. There are also some more grey market style products for purchase such as slaves and narcotics, however not all the goods you trade will be purchased from these markets. If you fit your ship with a fuel scoop and a mining laser you can set off to find your riches by mining asteroids, or perhaps some cargo floating in space from a less fortunate trader who may, or may not have died by your own doing. Just remember, buy low, sell high... or just steal it!

While some planets are reasonably safe allowing you to fly to the local space station unhindered, when you start to venture to less safe systems you will find yourself being engaged by pirates, who would like nothing more than to vaporise you while making off with your precious cargo. You start off armed with a measly pulse laser that will do the job against weaker foes, but you will find yourself needing to upgrade to something more powerful if you want to stay alive in the Elite universe. Missiles and energy bombs can also be purchased to give you a fighting chance, while other defensive devices can also be added to your craft such as an electronic counter measure system (ECM), which when used will destroy any missiles close to your ship (including your own, so be careful when you use it!) If you successfully destroy a space pirate, you will be instantly rewarded with a bounty, while also increasing your Elite rating moving (very slowly) from 'harmless' to 'Elite'.

With combat and trading now outlined, this leaves us with the exploration part. By opening your map console, you are presented with the galactic map with many systems dotted across the screen, which you can then zoom in for a closer view of local systems with a circle around your current star system. This circle indicates how far you can travel with your current ship and fuel. You can then further drill down to one of these systems individually which will give you more detailed information about the habitable planet including political status, economy, population, the native race (e.g. Humanoid), and so on, with a very brief description of the unique attributes the planet has and a neat little render of the planet. While some of this information is not all that important, some of it can be used to gain some indication if the system is safe to visit, while also getting a glimpse into its economy which can be useful to work out what you need to buy up big on before setting off to make sure your trip is profitable.



I can never get a decent car park at the shopping mall.

I feel the need, the need.. for speeeeed!

One owner, only 60,000 light years on the clock. Bargain!

Looks like a fish, moves like a fish, steers like a cow!

Not sure why this ship has elevator buttons on it...

So there you have the core mechanics of Elite, the nuts and bolts as it were. While the original game was built for the BBC micro home computer using simple graphics and wire frame 3D visuals, the Amiga version takes full advantage of the extra horsepower giving us rich colourful visuals, and solid coloured 3D visuals along with some improved sound effects. While improving on the original, it still has a very 8bit feel to it and not as polished as it could have been, and sonically it is very basic both musically and in sound effects. One thing that really bugs me is how all the planets you visit are always a bland green circle, backed up with yellowish stars and green space stations. Its not the ugliest game, but some variety would have given the feeling of actually visiting different worlds instead of feeling like ground-hog day. However, If we have learnt anything from last issue's Street Fighter special, sometimes the ugly duckling can still be fun. While the Amiga version does not remove anything from the original, it certainly does not bring anything new, and it takes what was already a hard game and makes it even harder! Newcomers will find the going tough as it's not uncommon to make your first system jump only to be wiped out by an overpowering enemy. On one of my fresh starts, my first jump landed me in hot water with no less than 6 enemies that attacked me one by one as I desperately tried to make it to the safety of the space station. Even by using the emulator save states I never did make it, and don't get me started about docking... with air-bags standard in cars today, I am sure auto pilot docking computers would be a standard fitting in the year 2700. Death will come swiftly to newcomers many times as they try to manually dock.

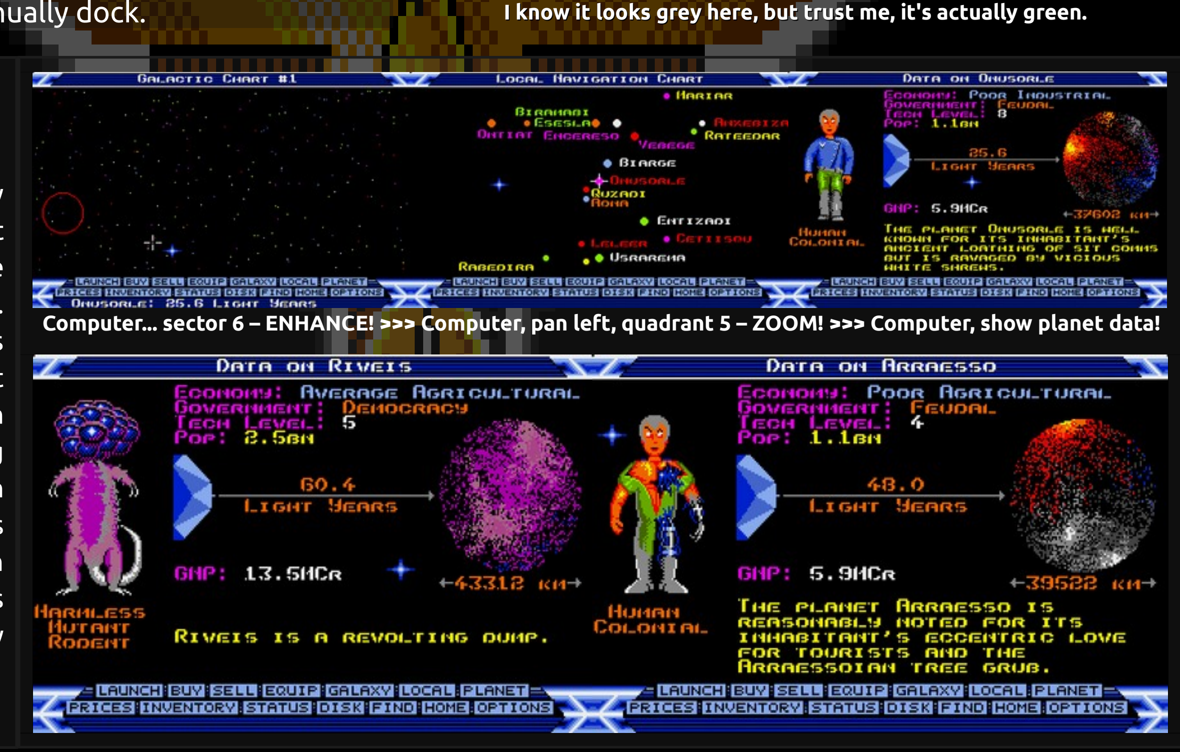
Drugs, slaves, guns, booze... all the essentials are here.

In the future, all space ships run on 'AA' batteries apparently!

I know it looks grey here, but trust me, it's actually green.

It's Life Jim, but not as we know it...

Elite is home to many lifeforms throughout the galaxy, some strange and unique... but even more strange is some of the planet descriptions which can be quite amusing. Using the galaxy map, you can zoom into local systems and then view data on the local planet, such as Riveis which apparently is a 'Revolting dump'...



Computer... sector 6 – ENHANCE! >>> Computer, pan left, quadrant 5 – ZOOM! >>> Computer, show planet data!



It's a yellow lobster, that just happens to look green ok?

More green... and fairy lights!

KABOOOOM! Another one bites the dust!

This is why I struggle to find Elite fun. Instead of easing you into the universe of Elite surrounding you with safe systems, it throws everything at you which results in death many times over until you can build your ship up enough to have a fighting chance. It's quite a gamble with your life each time you travel to another planet, and thus saving all the time is a must. While after some time you will manage to survive, because every star system has one planet which is always green, circled by one space station (which is also green), it quickly becomes very repetitive as you go through the motions of buy, jump, fight, dock, sell, repeat. It feels like ground-hog day and I found myself losing the will to explore because no matter where I go, it always looks and feels the same, with the only real incentive to increase my rating which is literally having a single word change on one screen.

Elite was ground breaking. It is genre defining. It changed the landscape of gaming as we know it forever. It is one of the single most important games in history and I respect that, heck I even enjoy it somewhat after persevering with it for a long time, but this does not mean I love it. If you are a newcomer to this game, you will struggle a lot at first due to the way it throws you into its brutal world head first. The problem is, I can't give a reason to really persevere with it because ultimately, no matter how long you play it for, you will never really see anything different or new with it's somewhat repetitive gameplay, average graphics (for an Amiga game) and sub average sound. Ground breaking in 1984, but four years later on the Amiga it was a missed opportunity to build and expand upon this classic, while addressing some of the gameplay issues and adding new features. A universe full of green planets... ***sigh***.

Green space stations circle green planets, inhabited by green lobsters. I hope you like green...

Elite

A500 - 1988

GRAPHICS	65%
SOUND	30%
GAMEPLAY	75%

While adding improved visuals over the original, the Amiga version brings nothing new while not taking full advantage of the Amiga's capabilities.

SCORE	70%

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Frontier Elite II

A500 / A1200 - 1993 - Gametek



Just sit back and enjoy the view. No rush to go anywhere



More of a space city than a space station, just aim for the middle.



We have lift off! Looking back as we blast away into space.



Just cruising with the windows down and the music up!

I think the Hitch Hikers guide to the Galaxy sums up how you feel the first time you load up Frontier and check the map...

"Space is big. You just won't believe how vastly, hugely, mind- bogglingly big it is. I mean, you may think it's a long way down the road to the chemist's, but that's just peanuts to space!" - Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy, 1978

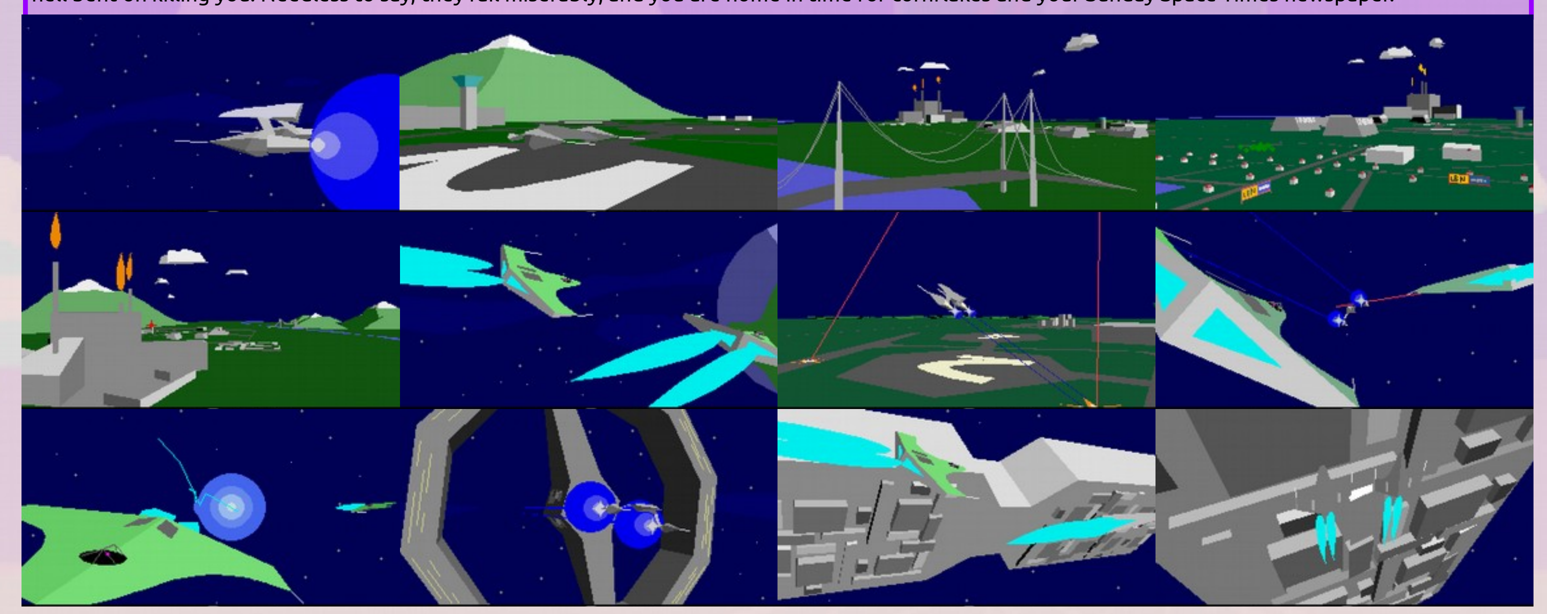
This could not be any truer with Frontier Elite II. The first time you open Frontier's star map you soon realise just how massive the universe is, and how massive this game is! How big? Well there are 513,982,470 unique star systems, which on its own seems ridiculously large, but when you take into account the majority of these star systems have any number of planets circling them (even stars circling stars), which can have moons circling, and even star ports circling some of these... please excuse me while I scrape off the floor what is left of my mind which just exploded! It really is that big. Even more impressive is where the original game you could only look at a system's planet from afar, in Frontier you can fly right up close, enter the planet's atmosphere (if it has one) and fly over mountains, craters, oceans and cities, before finally landing on said planet. Such was the ambition of this game that we are only today seeing a resurgence in space games which surpass Frontiers mind-boggling scale, with games like No Man's Sky and Elite Dangerous, although the new version of Elite still does not allow you to land on planets to explore (yet).

So what is the point of all of this space you ask? In a single word, freedom. The freedom to do whatever you like, go where ever you want, and generally lead whatever life you choose. Just like its predecessor, you are not presented with any story or direction on what you must do, you are simply placed into your ship at a space port, handed your map and phone, and given the choice to do whatever you want. Look up the bulletin board to see what is trading for a good price, and travel the galaxy trading goods for the best profit, ever increasing your bank account. You could play it safe and trade in stable and trusted commodities such as robotics and fresh food, or more risky goods such narcotics and slaves. These are outlawed in some systems which means you have to take your chances with the law, and if caught you must deal with the space filth by either paying your fine, or a shadier under the table bribe.

Where the original Elite focused mostly on trading and space combat between, Frontier introduces the bulletin board where you can find a wide variety of jobs you can undertake to also earn space bucks. These vary from safe and simple requests such as taking a small package to a system or flying a group of passengers, to assassination requests and even military missions. Some of these missions will attract some unwanted attention from individuals who would like to do nothing more than stop you from completing your mission at any cost, which normally involves you and some form of death, so naturally these missions have higher earnings. The bigger the risk and further the destination, the bigger the rewards. For example, someone may have a small package that seems like a very simple mission, but after asking some questions you might find out this package is actually secret documents from the Federation military, which goes a long way to explain why they are willing to pay you a large sum of cash. Always check what you are getting yourself into and prepare yourself appropriately. The bulletin board can also be a place where you can sell your goods at a better price than the local market, and it's always a good idea to check first because you may get triple the price for your cargo by selling to individuals that are desperate for particular goods. Finally, it is also a place to sell your grey market goods such as weapons and narcotics through stores that advertise they buy and sell goods that are 'interesting and otherwise'. You just need to be careful that the person you are dealing with is not an undercover cop who loves nothing more than to bust you as soon as you make your illegal trade. Find a trust worthy dealer and remember their name!

A day in the life of a space trader...

Life sure is tough for a space trader as you can see in the opening in Frontier. There you are minding your own business when these two fools come along hell bent on killing you. Needless to say, they fail miserably, and you are home in time for cornflakes and your Sunday Space Times newspaper.



Earning all of this cash then allows you to start shopping around for a new ship or upgraded parts. There are many upgrades available for your ship which you can add or remove depending on your mission requirements. For example, it is extremely important to fit a cargo bay life support system if you are going to trade in slaves or live animals, unless you are in the business of creating expensive fertiliser. Seriously, I once bought five tonnes of slaves without life support, and after arriving at my destination it took me some time to understand why all my precious cargo of slaves had disappeared and replaced with five tonnes of fertiliser. Very morbid, but I could not help but laugh when I worked out what I had done. Naturally your initial ship is somewhat limited and upgrading it is also essential as you progress, but depending on what path you take depends on which ship you choose. Traders will look to the largest ships offering big cargo bays to hold as much cargo as possible, although these tend to be slow with limited range and require you to hire additional personnel to crew, meaning further running costs. Of course if you choose the life of an assassin then big ships like these are going to be pointless, and so you would be better off going for one of the small fighter ships that are fast and nimble. There is a good range of ships to choose from and a neat feature is visually not only does each of these have their own unique registration number and different colours, but as you add different upgrades some of these are also visible on your ship adding antenna and so on. One final word of warning, if you are travelling to a planet that has an atmosphere it is essential to purchase the atmospheric shielding! There is nothing worse than travelling half way across the galaxy only to watch your ship burn up as you reach your destination!

How Big?

Frontier literally contains an entire galaxy as you can see here as we zoom out from a single space station orbiting Earth using the games navigation screens, until the whole universe comes into view.... and yes... you can visit all those stars! Mind blowing!

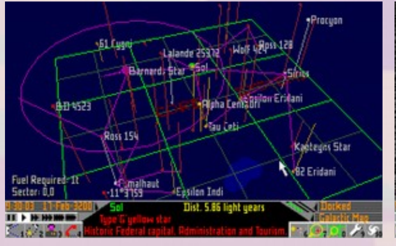






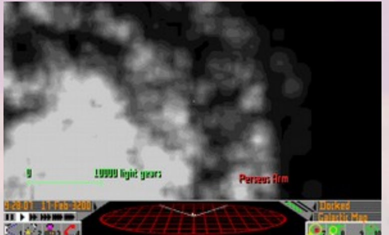


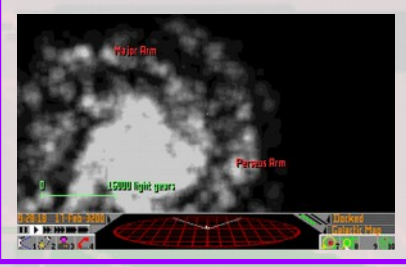














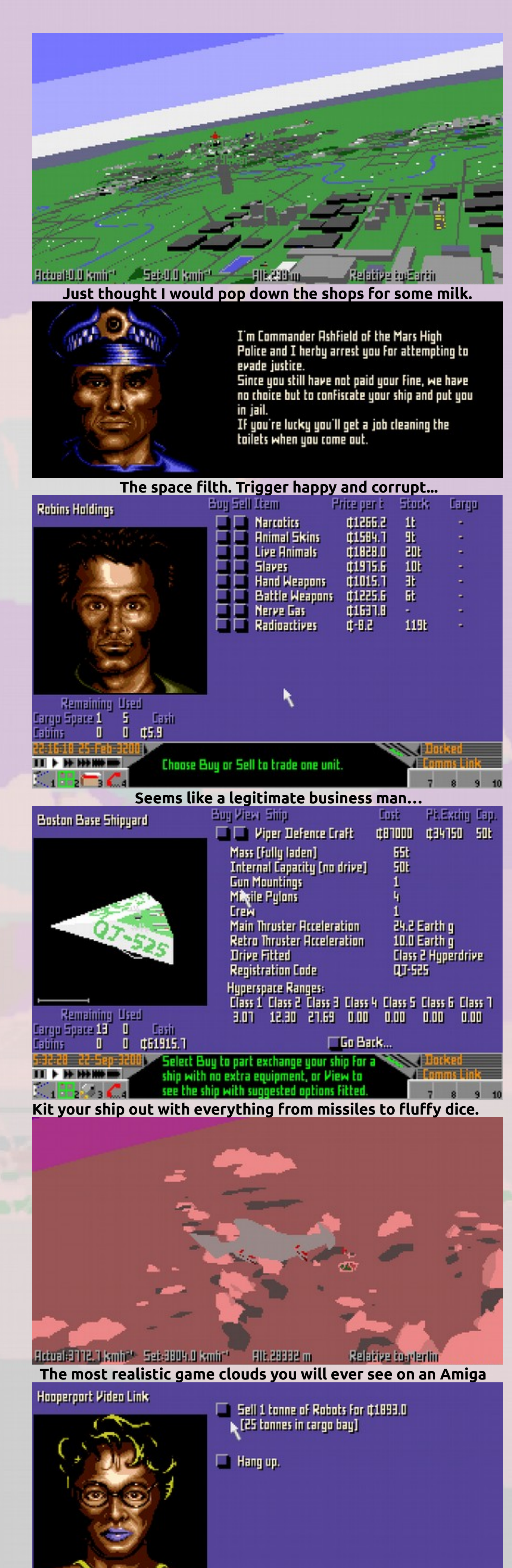


Navigating in Frontier is quite simple once you get the hang of it. You have your star chart which you move around highlighting systems, which if in range of your hyper-drive with sufficient fuel, you can simply jump to. Once there, opening the local system map allows you to zoom in and out of the planets, and once you zoom in close enough you will find either a circling space station or space port on the planet / moon, which clicking on will set the target of your auto pilot. Switch on the auto pilot and fast forward to find yourself preparing to dock or land. Thankfully an auto pilot comes standard in Frontier, and while it is possible to navigate without one, you would have to be very committed as there is very little point. One small issue with the game is while your autopilot is capable of navigating the vastness of space, it does for some reason go a little crazy sometimes when docking with a space station and will result in you crashing into the solid steel side of the station. Thankfully, unlike Elite, docking is a lot simpler with your ship automatically aligning with a station's rotation when close enough, so you only have to worry about guiding your ship towards the open airlock. If you choose to do this manually, do not forget to hail the space station prior and request docking clearance because if you don't, the control tower will get very grumpy and request the trigger happy police intervene, which will result in either your death or a warrant for your arrest along with a hefty fine.

What makes Frontier special though is while you can do all of this great stuff, there is one thing that you can do that does not reward you with cash or any ranking of any sort, and that is simply exploring the galaxy. Discover systems that have multiple suns while watching a beautiful planet set into the horizon of the alien moon you are on, or simply explore our own solar system where you can visit the rings of Saturn or the now terraformed green Mars. While admittedly there are a limited amount of variations to the planets and suns, different combination of systems keeps every trip unique and exciting in the pursuit to discover new things. To boldly go where no man has gone before... you get the idea. But completing missions and getting into space battles will increase your ratings (for better or worse depending on who you are working for), and with a better ranking comes the ability to unlock higher paying and more dangerous missions.

This is all presented in 3D which for its time is very detailed and impressive. While possible to play on the humble A500 which is impressive for its sheer size, you better have the detail switched to minimal to make it fast enough to play. With a decent speed machine or through emulation though, you can run things in full detail which even today still look good (in a retro way!). One of the first things that struck me visually was how non-polygon the game looks. All the planets, their rings, wings of ships and even the clouds and mountains are curved and not straight or square, thanks to the use of Bézier edges. This is something unique at the time and not used much even post Frontier. Cities on planets both either inside domes or open air are detailed with trees, roads, houses, shops and even factories. Planets are littered with craters and mountain ranges, some with atmospheres of different colours and others the darkness of space, while space stations vary from small outposts to massive orbiting cities complete with windows, names, landing beacon lights and radar dishes. Heck, there are even advertising billboards and warning signs such as the 50 meter clearance on airlocks. One massive ship I ventured across had the smallest of details with maximum weight and other information inscribed on one of its pods, so small that you can only see it when you get close enough to crash into it! The detail for the time is nothing short of impressive. Also, while the Amiga has a small palette which would normally limit the games colour range, Frontier uses a unique method for the time where the pallet is constantly updating every frame to best suit on screen, giving a more colourful universe to explore, although it does result in some sudden colour changes.

With most of the game made up from the 3D engine, there are some small areas where more traditional graphics are used such as the bulletin board where you are presented with an image of the individual you are talking to, which also uses procedurally generated faces made up from multiple parts and different colours giving each person a similar, but different look. It has to be said that these other graphical areas such as your ships control panel are very basic and almost crudely drawn, but then again this fits in with the 3D visuals better without suffering the conflicting graphical quality between 3D and non 3D that other games suffer, while not distracting from the on screen action. The in game audio is nothing much to write home about, and while it contains a good selection of music, it is far from the best example on the Amiga. It is understandable that with the size of the game there is little room for sound effects and music, so considering these limitations I can't complain too much. There are enough sound effects in the game to prevent it from sounding empty, from the sound of wind and the drone of space stations, to the satisfying explosions from your foe after a long battle. It's not special, but again fits in well with the game.



Just thought I would pop down the shops for some milk.

The space filth. Trigger happy and corrupt...

Seems like a legitimate business man...

Kit your ship out with everything from missiles to fluffy dice.

The most realistic game clouds you will ever see on an Amiga

KA-CHING! Thank you yellow haired, purple lipstick freaky woman!



Is that a custom built planet from Magrathea? I bet it was made by Slartibartfast himself!



Just chillin, watching the sun set over mountains on an alien planet.

All in the detail! Amazingly for a game that has a whole galaxy, Frontier's small details go further than most. The ship above looks to have small dots on the end of its pods, but if you dare fly close enough you will find this is actually maximum container weight and handling instructions. Small details like this are littered throughout the game....

There is so much to this game, and I have not even began to touch on many other aspects, such as the two military powers (The Federation and The Empire), how you can track ships through hyperspace using hyperspace cloud analysers to aid you in following mission targets, and of course space battles and mining. The question that is as big as this game though... is this game actually any fun to play? It's one thing to create a whole universe, but another to create fun. The answer to this question really depends on the individual. Playing a game with no plot, no story or no direction to some may seem pointless and no fun at all, while for others wishing to simply explore the universe and seek their fortunes will love this game. I am of the latter group and found myself loving my time in Frontier's universe. It's not perfect, with dog fighting sometimes awkward and the inability to search for a system in the map by name frustrating, but the feeling of vastness and satisfaction from exploring the depths of space is matched by very few games, even all these years after its release. While Elite introduced us to a small part of the universe, Frontier opened the whole universe up for us to fully explore and become lost in seeking our fame and fortune. Space is big, really big....

Frontier

GOLD!

A500 / A1200 - 1993

GRAPHICS	94%
SOUND	58%
GAMEPLAY	90%

A game so big, this review is only the tip of your adventure. If you love space and 'sim like' games, you will love Frontier. Truly Amazing

SCORE 92%

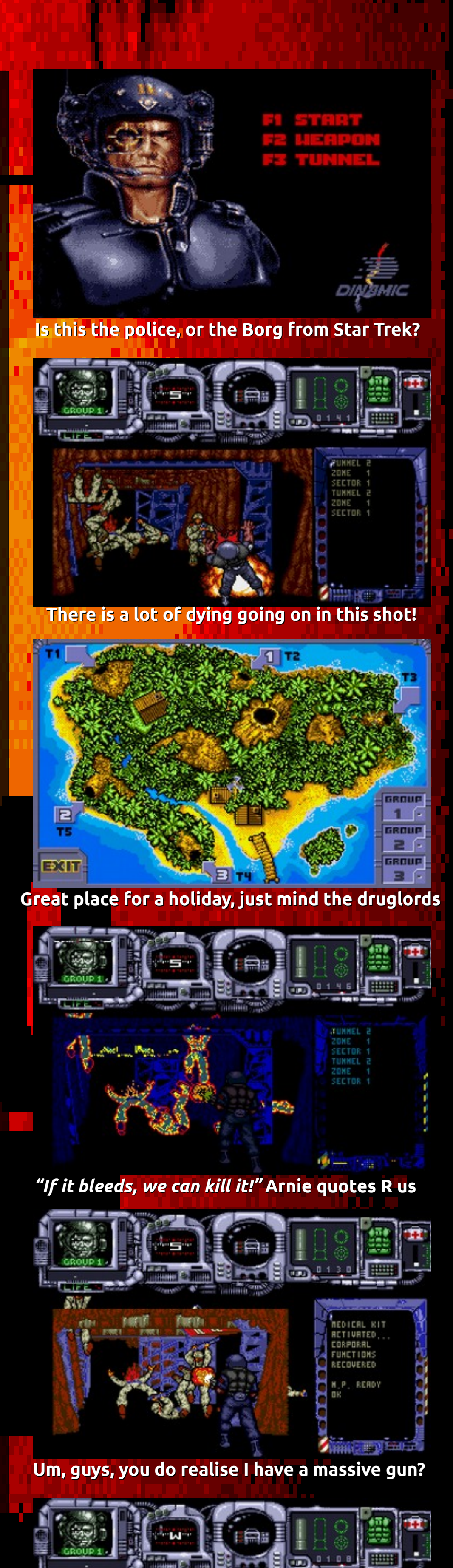
A500 - 1991 - Dynamic Software

NARCO POLICE

As a proof of concept, Narco Police was amazing for the time, but unfortunately as a full game it falls well short of anything really playable or fun. It's a shame, because with some work and changes, this could have been something special with its unique third person run and gun action!

In a time when texture mapped 3D graphics were still a distant future technology only visible in our dreams, Narco Police took the approach to create its 3D tunnel action using a large volume of sprites. This gives the illusion of solid walls made of steel and rock complete with equally matched ceilings, from which enemies jump and roll from behind, armed to the teeth with machine guns, rocket launchers, and even tanks! To achieve this with full scaling sprites on the Amiga would have required a large amount of memory and severe sacrifices would have been required to the quality and variety, but the development team had a trick up their sleeve. None of the on screen sprites used for the walls and roof are actually scaled, but are simply cropped and moved in a way that you are given the illusion that you are moving forward deeper into the enemies tunnel. It's very clever and unique for the Amiga.

The game itself is an odd mix of action, vague strategy and, oddly, text entry. Prior to starting the game, you have the opportunity to visit the armoury to pick and choose from the wide range of weapons and devices available. From there you can also visit the map screen where you can change the placing of your three units, starting in one of the five tunnels that litter the drug lords island. I have to say the presentation here is neat, with your mouse pointer animating to match each screens such as a flying helicopter on the map screen. Once finished, you head straight into the tunnels to start the action where you run with the camera over your shoulder third person style, with the ability to move side to side and shoot all around including up in the air, which is needed when taking out hidden cameras. What makes this odd is the use of a computer terminal on your right side where you actually enter commands like "DIR" or "ABORT", and even more oddly to use your other weapons such as missiles requiring you to enter "M1" and so forth to fire. This terminal is also used when you come across computer terminals in the game, which allows you to open doors and disables cameras which is a neat little addition.



Is this the police, or the Borg from Star Trek?

There is a lot of dying going on in this shot!

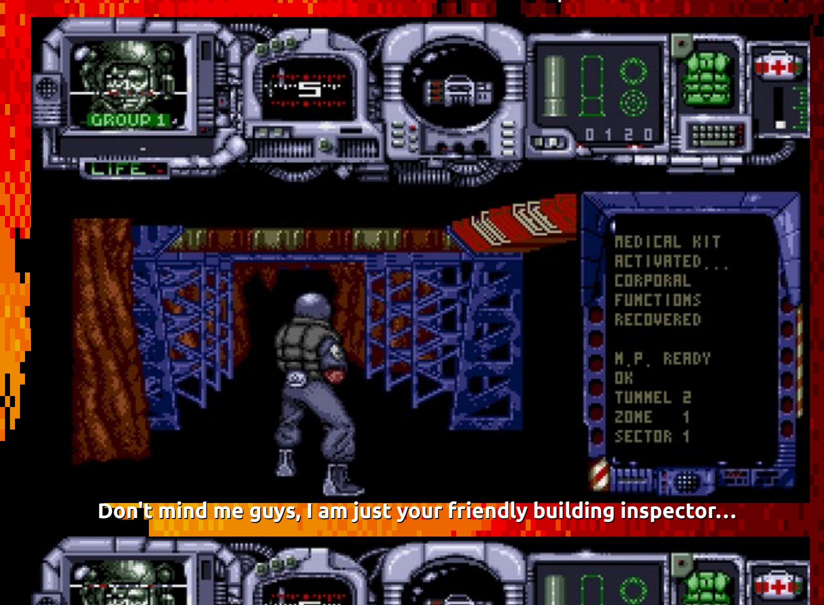
Great place for a holiday, just mind the druglords

"If it bleeds, we can kill it!" Arnie quotes R us

Um, guys, you do realise I have a massive gun?

It's a bit quiet here... too quiet! Now I am worried!

While all of this sounds interesting, if not a little odd, there are some serious faults that bring the whole game crashing down. Firstly, the frame rate of the game goes from slow when not much is happening on screen, to almost freeze frame when a lot of action is happening on screen. We are talking almost a frame a second at its worst, which as you can imagine results in any glimmer of gameplay the game had dying faster than the drug cartel you are mowing down with your machine gun! The game also feels like only a single level with no real variety or differences as you progress through. The second half changes slightly with different looking enemies and very slight changes to the background, but overall the game is actually quite short and very limited. The only thing that prevents it being a short game to play through is its insane difficulty and limited ammunition. Combine this with some very low-fi below-average sound effects, and music that sounds like it was made by myself (which means... rubbish!), and you have one very odd and very average game indeed.



Don't mind me guys, I am just your friendly building inspector...

Oh now come on, that is just not fair. How many of you are there?

Lets go shopping!

Bet I can get a sweet deal on missiles!

Speed the game up, add more variety, get rid of the confusing terminal, and turn it into a more traditional shooter with a gradual difficulty curve set over different locations and different drug lords, and this could have been an all time classic game which would have been king of the pre-Doom era. Such potential in the idea, but ultimately wasted on a very average game.



Narco Police

A500 - 1991

GRAPHICS	48%
SOUND	35%
GAMEPLAY	40%

A great idea for a game that is poorly executed. So much wasted potential...

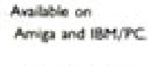
SCORE	44%

THE SPEED IS KILLING AND YOU CAN WATCH YOURSELF DIE FROM 6 DIFFERENT ANGLES.



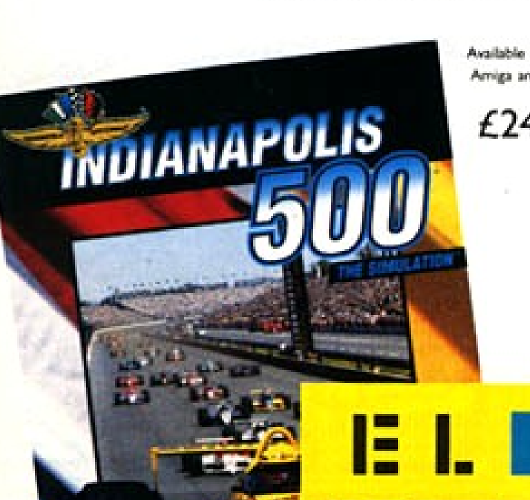
Indianapolis 500® is without doubt the fastest and most spectacular 3D race experience on the market. But don't take our word for it, this is an advertisement after all.

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Final Fight



"Winners don't use drugs"

A500 - 1991 - US Gold

Remember those awesome late 80's action movies they just don't make any more? You know the ones, where the Mayor's half naked large bra size daughter is kidnapped by a bad ass 80s gang demanding the city be handed to them, and her buff boyfriend who also happens to be best pals with her best male friend who discuss getting revenge (of course while at the Gym after working out together). So together they fight their way through all the stereo typical late 80s settings from the street life gangs down town, to the subway (you can almost smell the stale urine!), and even an underground boxing ring in a fight to the death... pure late 80s American action movie bliss. Oh, and let's not forget the Mayor who just happens to be a massive hulk of a man from his ex-street fighting wrestling days, and loves nothing more than to rip his shirt off and get stuck into the scum of his city!

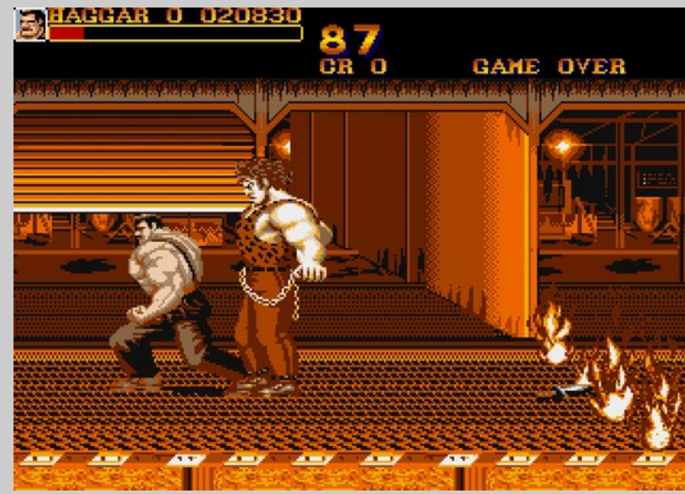
The above could have been any action movie from that era, but instead it's actually the arcade smash hit Final Fight, and here in all of its massive sprites glory is the Amiga version. Put simply, Final Fight is a side scrolling beat'em up in the Double Dragon genre where you simply have to punch and kick you way through wave after wave of gangsters, with the occasional metal pole or dagger to slash and bash with. To really get you pumped up for the action, there is an awesome tune to go along with the introduction which is also dripping with late 80s action movie ooze. It's certainly a highlight for me when I hear it start playing.

It's a pity then that all of this awesomeness is then wasted on a game that is mostly unplayable. Right from the start as you walk down a typical run down street teething with gangsters, you will have multiple thugs approach you from both in front and behind which, no matter how well you fight your way through, sooner or later you will become overwhelmed with punches coming from left and right. The issue is, when this happens there is generally no way of escape with the only way out being death. No matter how many times you bash your button, trying all moves including your special move, you are rendered helpless nearly every time this happens due to the number of punches thrown at you continuously. Sure, you can move around and time punches to avoid this, but this soon turns into a game of avoidance and timing with no real fun, instead of going in like an action movie with fists blazing and round house kicks flying. Speaking of moves, you have a whopping three at your disposal with a punch, a kick, and a special move which differs for one of the three playable characters, such as Haggar's Pile Driver move which will bring a smile to your face. To say your moves are lacking variety is understating things a little.

This issue is not helped by the frame rate dropping severely as more and more thugs approach you. One of Final Fight's appeals is the use of really large characters filling the screen, but as we witnessed last issue with Street Fighter, the humble A500 struggles with just two large characters on screen at once if not programmed well, so asking your beige friend to handle a multitude of even bigger characters on screen at once is not going to end well. Anything more than yourself and a couple of thugs will result in everything starting to slow down and become very jerky, making it even more difficult to play. You can get around this with emulation if you like by making your A500 run faster ("least accurate" on FS-UAE), but on real hardware you are going to get the slowdown blues about every ten steps.

Graphically it's a bit of a mixed bag. While it can look just 'OK' to plain 'Ugly!', I still find myself kind of enjoying my time with Final Fight due to each section being very short, resulting in a lot of variety and very little repetition which some games suffer. It almost feels like you are playing through a fighting game level for each section, and there is a good quantity here as well including a couple of bonus stages where Capcom's obsession for destroying parked cars makes an appearance. A nice arcade graphical intro accompanies the game to give it that true arcade feel along with that great music, but while the music is great, the in game sound is extremely poor with no backing music leaving it very silent and sparse.

Despite all of its issues, there is part of me that still enjoys this game. It's hard to explain why, with its poor gameplay, lacking audio and dismal frame rate, but at the end of the day it's still a bit of fun to load up now and then for an arcade blast. Play it on emulation to avoid the slow down and just like a lot of those action movies from that era, just lower your expectations somewhat... you might just find yourself having a bit of fun if you do. Just not lots.

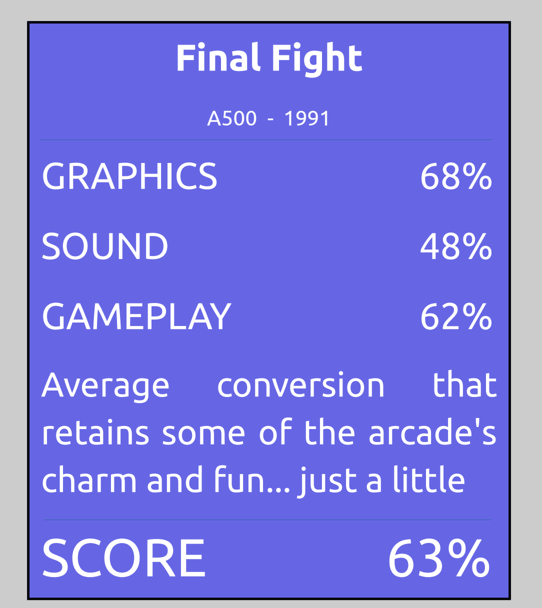


You looking mighty cute in those jeans boy! HMMMMM!!



Underground boxing ring with a ninja. Makes perfect sense to me!

I seem to have accidentally wondered into the Sydney Mardi Gras



Final Fight

A500 - 1991

GRAPHICS	68%
SOUND	48%
GAMEPLAY	62%

Average conversion that retains some of the arcade's charm and fun... just a little

SCORE	63%




BILLY
The
KID
BANK
"BILLY THE KID" IS A 1 OR 2 PLAYER ACTION/STRATEGY GAME SET IN THE WILD WEST, WHICH ALLOWS THE PLAYER TO ASSUME THE IDENTITY OF EITHER A GUN TOTING DESPERADO WITH A HEART OF GOLD, BILLY HIMSELF, OR HIS EX-BEST FRIEND, SHARP SHOOTING, LAW ABIDING PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY, SHERIFF PAT GARRETT.
THEY ARE IN LOVE WITH THE SAME WOMAN AND ULTIMATELY, IN A NAIL BITING CLIMATIC FINALE, ARE GOING TO END UP POINTING GUNS AT EACH OTHER. ONLY ONE CHARACTER CAN WALK AWAY FROM THIS SHOWDOWN - BUT THAT'S JUST THE WAY OF THE WEST.
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A500 - 1991 - Millennium

MoonShine Racers

Hill-billy red-neck booze swilling moonshine runners... man, I am so in the wrong job! What isn't there to love about it? I mean, you get to drive around in hotrod pick-ups with the pedal to the metal, the wind in your hair while delivering liquid joy to hundreds of people in bars across the big 'ol USA. Of course, there is that whole legality thing with the local cop and his dog hell bent on putting a stop to your illegal activities, but don't let that get between you and a good business venture!

So let's get to the meat of the game. It's a driving game that throws you into a race against the clock and other hard working 'delivery drivers', all competing to deliver their goods first and make the highest profit. The extra profit you make can be used to upgrade your delivery hot rod truck improving speed, handling, and even fluffy dice! Of course what you are doing is not exactly legal and the local bumbling cop will always be on the lookout for you and your friends which, once he gets a sniff of your moonshine, will chase you down and try to run you off the road.

Sounds like a lot of fun, but unfortunately I use the word 'fun' very loosely, and by 'loosely' I mean as loose as the nuts and bolts in your steering wheel, which seems to have no connection between which way you steer and which way you actually drive! Handling is virtually non-existent in this game, combined with a sluggish frame rate making it more of a game of luck than actual skill. A real shame as the tracks are kind of interesting, with the road splitting in places and Mr ploddy police man hiding behind trees, but poor frame rate and terrible scaling of objects just makes it wind up looking a bit of a mess in the end and hard to know what is even happening at times.





Why would I need to vote for my Sheriff? He looks drunk to me!



Never mind road works here, why not fix the road ahead which looks crazy bumpy!



Thanks boss, that's great advice! You are so wise!

It's a real shame the core game is so unplayable as it's an original and fun idea. For starters it has a very polished opening, introducing you to the local cop who cries out 'Those darn moonshiners are at it again!' as they start cooking up their latest batch. From here you are introduced to the characters in the game who all have a role to play, and it's not just for the introduction. These individuals pop up in the top of your screen as you are racing with banter adding some life to what would have been just another lifeless racer. All backed up with some great mood setting banjo music and sounds that are 'not outstanding but do the job'.

Moonshine Racers is a little like when you drink the moonshine they are carrying. After the first swig things get off to a fantastic start (the intro), a few swigs latter everything is really interesting (cool banjo music and characters)... but then things go downhill pretty fast as you start to really gulp down on the paint stripper, leading to one big drunken mess completely out of control and with no idea what is going on (the game). Save yourself the hangover and avoid moonshine racers.









Moonshine Racers

A500 - 1991

GRAPHICS	52%
SOUND	45%
GAMEPLAY	36%

Everything about this game screams fun, until you actually race. It's a drunken mess!

SCORE	41%



Simple maths would suggest that taking 3 games that are one third the quality of a decent full game, and combining them all together into a single game would all add up to a full game of same quality. However, no matter which way you look at it, three games that are one third the quality will still give you a total game that is only one third the quality, no matter how long it is. Welcome to the world of Savage, where you get three games for the price of one!

I get the feeling the publisher had three very different games lying around of budget quality which they were unsure what to do with, until some young bright spark of an intern said they should combine them all together with some very loose throw away story. Do not even bother to combine them together into a single game... simply keep them separate with the player choosing which to load, and a simple password to prevent them playing future levels fully until they complete each prior level. Then release it on the general public. Hopefully he was fired shortly after! Combining a platform game, a first person flying shooter and flying eagle game makes for a very unusual experience!

First up, you have a simple side scrolling platform game where your half naked medieval buff of a hero shoots his way through evil nasties and goblins with his never ending supply of battle axes, and occasional potion resulting in a spinning shield or bolts of lightning. Its clunky and simple, only scrolling left to right over simplistic backgrounds. Enemies continuously spawn from set points and are a weird mix of creatures looking like they would be more at home in a Ghostbusters cartoon. Gaps to jump over are annoying due to horrible controls, and poor design sometimes means when you drop down to the level below, a spider is set to spawn where you fall, resulting in your character losing energy as you both slowly drop together with nothing you can do to prevent it. All this and the fact that almost half of your screen is taken up by your health bar giving you limited view, adds up to a very average experience.

Anyone who perseveres through this will be rewarded with a password which will enable full lives in the second section. This section is kind of a first person flying shootem'up... thing... to be honest I don't really know what is going on here! You have to avoid flying into evil looking statue like creatures while shooting spinning floating skulls, goblin heads, or bouncing stone heads. You can steer left and right, and control your vertical angle which is completely pointless as it makes no difference. There are a few levels of this... and that's about all I can say for the second part.

What's behind door number 1?


SAAAAVAAAAAAGE!


The official cracktro for Savage


Enough with the groin thrusting!


We are not impressed!


A space dungeon to fly around in.


Big snakes! Why not?


Not sure where he hides those axes


Run Forest, run!


If on drugs, this makes sense.


Junk food will do that to a man...


Unfortunate place for explosion


Get ready for lots of blood


I'm free! Yipeeeeeee!



Get those guys drug tested, just look at their blood shot eyes!



Splat! It's really unfair that you can be splattered by the giant boulders, but the other purple birds don't get a scratch.



Savage shows off his levitating party trick. Quality programming...

Finally, after collecting your final password, you can commence the final battle in which you find yourself now a bird, flying around in a maze trying to find four artifacts. Once you have all of these, you can bribe your way out and save your beautiful maiden from the clutches of evil.... **oh the hell with it! Nothing has made sense so far so I am just going to go along with this!** Surprisingly, this is probably the most playable level with the maze scrolling in each direction, and unlike the other two levels which have some serious slow down issues, this level manages a rock solid frame rate. Unfortunately saying it's better than the other two levels is very little praise, and the single maze level is somewhat annoying due to a whisker of a touch from a rock or floating sea mine thingy resulting in your instant death. It's frustrating, annoying, and again nearly half your screen is taken up by your health bar.

By now you must be thinking I don't like this game very much, and to be honest you are right! Each level is poorly made, annoying to play, and basic at best to look at. Its design of having three separate parts is stupid because you have to actually reboot your Amiga to play the next level when you complete each, or if want to watch the intro, and as such high scores are also for each level individually and not totalled meaning there is no real point of having high scores. However, there is one very small silver lining in the audio. Not the sound effects.. they are rubbish at best. No, it's the music! Each level has a sound track either in the title screen or during the game and its very orchestral rock with lots of shouting and guitar squealing... this almost makes the game worth booting up! They even decided since hackers would probably add their own hacktro, they included their own with more Savage shouting and big bold Roman brass trumpets over wobbly text effects and scroll text! The funniest part is, hackers did not really add anything more, but instead made the game better by getting it to fit on a single disk instead of two!

Remember, three games at one third the quality all add up to a full game that is still one third the quality. The music is cool, and nothing else!



Tired of his battle axes, Savage pulls bolts of lighting out of his... ____
*Fill in the blanks with your own imaginative line and send it in to us at 880Gamer

Savage

A500 - 1989

GRAPHICS	60%
SOUND	67%
GAMEPLAY	45%

Boot it up for some rocking music, but don't bother with the actual game.

SCORE	58%

THIS IS THE 90's THIS IS KLAX™

THE TIC-TAC TILE GAME
It's simple in concept and easy to play. Catch the coloured tiles with the paddle and flip them into the bins to make same coloured stacks, diagonals and rows of three. Sounds easy? It is! The hard part is pulling yourself away from the game.

- The latest craze from California!
- 99 waves of sheer fun!
- The fastest selling coin-op ever!
- Addictive and challenging.
- Make multiple klaxes for massive points!
- Challenge your friends in head-to-head action.



TENGEN
The Name in Coin-Op Conversions

DoMARK

Available on: Atari ST, Amiga, IBM PC 3.5" & 5.25", Commodore 64 (cassette, disk) Amstrad (cassette, disk) Spectrum +3, Spectrum 48/128

Programmed by: Teque Software developments Ltd. Atari ST Screenshots

Published by Domark Ltd, Ferry House, 51-57 Lacy Road, London SW15 1PR Tel: 01-780 2224

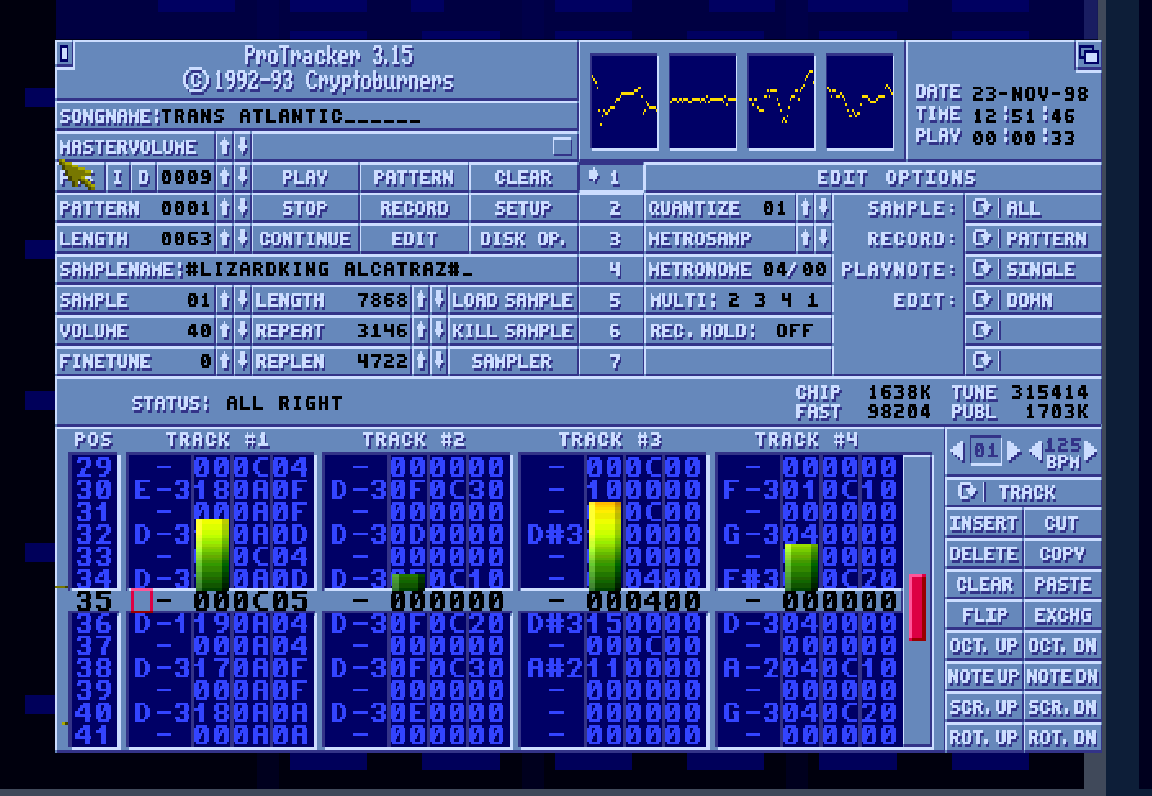
Bleeding eyes ><

Welcome to a very special edition of Bleeding eyes where we take a look, or rather, a listen to demo disks that are all about the music. It's no secret that the Amiga was special at creating sounds and music, and while by today's standards it is a little limited, it was and still is capable of producing some extremely fantastic and professional sounding music.

What made the Amiga great was you did not need any extra hardware to create great sounding music, and indeed you did not even need to buy professional software or instruments packs, with a lot of this available for free through local Public Domain distributors. This opened the flood gates for endless music creation with people all over the world composing unique and original soundtracks. All you needed was time, patience, and a touch of musical talent. I do not have any musical talent so you will never find any of my music tracks available anywhere. This is in the interest of public safety and their sanity!

However, there are a lot of musically talented people out there who created thousands upon thousands of music tracks in games, demo scene disks, and music compilation disks. While an endless amount of these modules (the name generally given to music files due to the most popular format... or Mod) are available in the public domain archives, however we are instead going to look at the compilation disks that were created by some of the bigger scene groups. These normally combined outstanding music with custom menus giving them a very professional and unique style.

Welcome, to the music disk special of bleeding eyes!



BRUS

Ephidrena - AGA - 2001

It's truly is amazing what a talented coder can do with only 4k of code. Heck, the humble C64 had 16 times more memory than that! Yet what we have here is a music demo with six different music tracks, and each of them sounds fantastic!

Normally a lot of these chip tune music tracks have a particular sound to them which is very distinct, however Brus stands out with a unique sound with some great sounding instruments. While each track does have a similar sound and the backing drum beat sounding repetetive throughout, there are some truly wonderful sounding synth chords, with some sounding like they would fit right in with a Prodigy album. It almost sounds like some sort of dedicated experimental hardware chips and electric tubes, and certainly not like an Amiga! These all sound very crisp and clear, although there is a quite audible clicking sound throughout which can be a little distracting, but it does not detract from the overall feel.

The tunes range from slower mellow tunes to upbeat electronic tunes giving a good variety, however despite how great they sound I can't say any of the tunes are really that memorable with none sticking in my head.

Presentation is extremely simple as per the single screen shot here. What you see here is all you get. There is also no way to select each song, instead they simply generate and play in order with a left click of the mouse moving you on to the next. I can't help but be impressed with the overall sound and style this music demo has for working in such limited code. Great tunes, great sound, great code!



81%

Rebels - AGA - 1996



While Brus aims for a unique and original sound with its chip tunes, Chip Nostalgia dives straight into the traditional chip tune territory throwing no less than 14 chip tunes at you. After a neat little intro, your ears are soon filled with bleeping and reverberating synth lines along with familiar electric drums filling the beat.

Nostalgia this is called, and nostalgia it gave me! Many a night was spent listening to the endless supply of cractro tunes that adorned all pirated games (not that I have ever owned any of those... *AHEM*..), and listening to these tunes brought all of those memories flooding back, while some others made my mind wonder off to Quick the Thunder Rabbit and other games that make great use of chip tunes. This music disk begs you to close your eyes and drift back to those days!

While the presentation in this music disk is very clean, it lacks the excitement it could have brought if they had given it some neat scroll text effects to add to the old skool cracktro style, and while you have 14 tunes at your disposal, some of these are very simple and very short tunes simply looping over and over.

Chip Nostalgia achieves what it set out to do by giving you a good trip down memory lane flooding your head with wavy scroll texts over colourful rainbow copper effects, and while the tunes sound good and have some nice variety, there is very little to make you want to return after playing through all the songs once.

74%

Melomaniac - AGA - 1996



Elements describes itself as "*a trip into synthesiser oriented and film-score inspired music*", and this does a pretty good job of summing up what you can expect from this music disk. The opening style and moody music feels very much like you are settling in for a block buster movie, giving way to a pleasant looking DVD style menu.

The included songs are all very nice, although there is something all very cheesy about it. It's hard to pin point, but as I sit here with my headphones on my head is filled with images of an empty hotel bar with tacky red velour chairs, fake gold plated fixtures, and cheap laminated wooden panels. I guess the best way I can sum up the feeling of the songs is they do feel like they are film-score inspired, but for a film that is on TV at midday, made on a budget, and released only on TV.

This is not to say the music is bad. All the songs are pleasant to listen to sounding like a cross between some well known games like shadow of the beast and the piano introduction to Agony, while casting your mind back to some classic movie inspired demo scene tracks. This could be because a lot of the instruments sound like they have come from a selection of these tunes, and as such the instruments do vary in quality and style resulting in a sound that is a little uneven.

For some reason despite the simple front end, I often had random crash errors with the program exiting for no reason. It's pleasant to listen to, but after such a great start with the opening credits hyping me up, I can't help but feel a little disappointed with the actual music on offer here. Good background music for while you are working.

65%

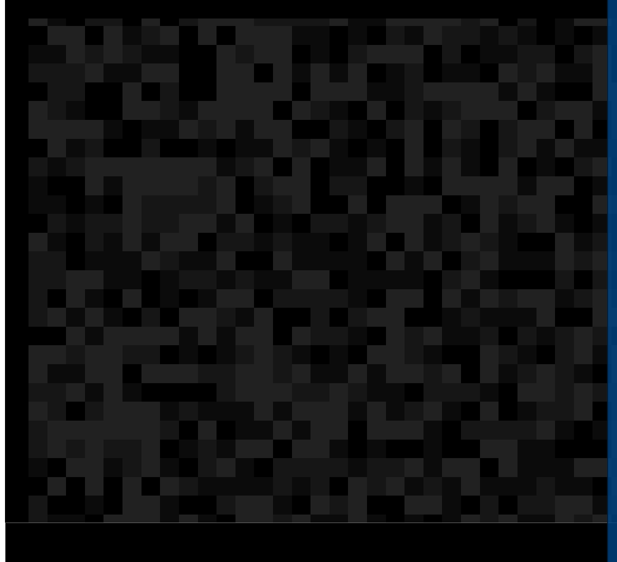
HACKS FOR TRACKS

Ephindrena - AGA - 2005

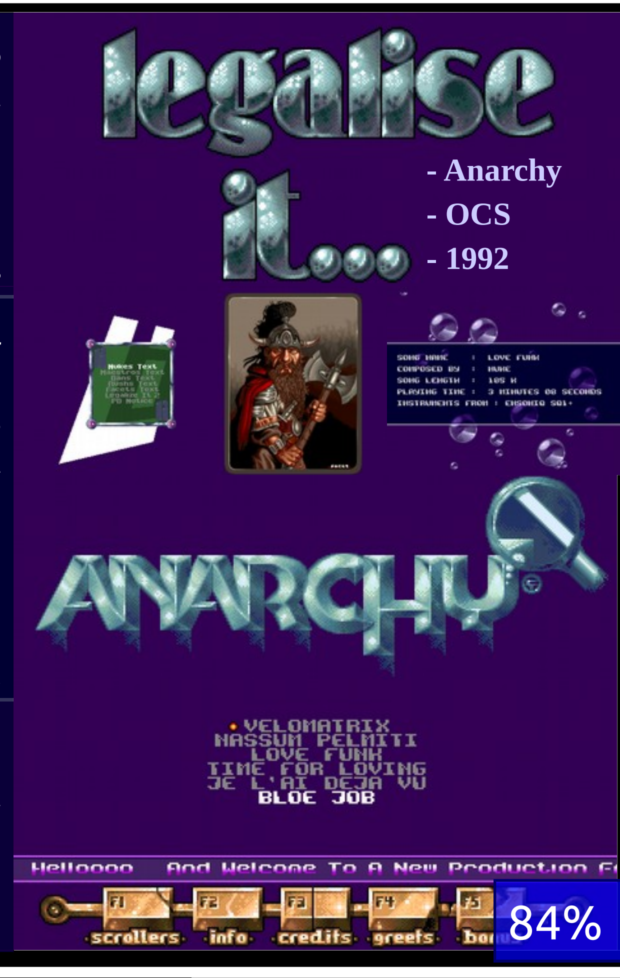
Without even planing to I find myself listening to another 4k music demo, and what a fantastic little number it is as well! I am completely blown away with the quality of the instruments with some excellent sounding crisp synth lines coupled with crazy phat bass. The quality and variety of the sounds generated had me rechecking the file size after I found myself thinking some of the sounds were of actual recorded sounds, but no... it's the real deal 4K!

The music is very electronica trance style, and would not sound out of place on our local radio station Fresh FM (Awesome station serving up electronica, dance, house etc.. check them out.. a free plug for all the Fresh'ies out there in Adelaide!), and I would not be surprised to hear something like this around midnight on some sort of DJ mix session.

Like Brus there is very little room for any flashy front end, however a TV style white noise background on simple text does the job just fine, and like Brus it simply plays through the tracks in order as each is generated. The only disappointment in this music compilation is the length of the songs. The opening track is a good length and really gets you in the mood, however the songs after are very short looping the basic tune before getting into the next song. They sound great as well, but just as you are starting to get into the feel of the song, it abruptly ends which is a shame. Unfortunately this is probably more due to the limitation of the file size to make it all fit which is very impressive for the challenge, but I can't help but wish they had made a bigger version to really flesh out the songs so they are full length providing the full experience this music demo deserves.



87%



Combining the smooth sounds of saxophones and crisp synthesisers, Legalise It is a trip into the sounds of smooth electronic Jazz influenced songs, with some chilled slow tempo tunes backed with upbeat drums. Don't expect any vocals or anything like that, it's just pure synthesiser and electronic sax heaven!

Everything sounds amazingly crisp, with none of the instruments compromised on quality giving a consistent feel throughout all of the songs. Sometimes, songs on the Amiga can be impacted by their limited four track construction, which can lead to instruments getting cut off mid way through as the composer struggles to find space to play the following instrument. This can result in jarred transitions, but Legalise It suffers none of this with a very polished sound.

This high level of polish carries over into the overall presentation as well. Right from the introduction with nice logos running silky smooth over a short and sweet introduction track, the high quality continues throughout all the sub menus giving you access to different scroll texts, information about the current music track, and even a little bonus picture. It's really well done and matches the music perfectly.

While the music style here is not exactly to my taste, I can really appreciate the quality on offer and found myself really enjoying my time with Legalise It. A very refreshing change from all the techno 'doof doof' that dominated the early 90's!



Anarchy – OCS - 1992

Hot on the heels of Legalise It, Legalise It 2 takes all the great stuff from the original and just runs with it, creating an even more polished and wonderful sounding music disk! While the original had an influence leaning towards Jazz, this disk goes all out Jazz style on the majority of the tracks which I am really digging!

Again the quality here is unmatched, with extremely crisp and original sounding instruments giving an almost CD quality sound to this production. While initially looking like there are 8 tunes on offer, it does not take long to discover there are a further 7 'hidden' tracks which you can access by pressing F4-F10. These songs stray from the Jazz style and move into the realm of traditional demo style tunes. While the quality and length of these tunes is not quite as good as the 'main event', it's a great bonus giving a lot more variety and content to an already great music disk.

The presentation borrows a lot from the original, which is not a particularly bad thing as this means the quality is top-notch and very polished as you can see here. Even if the style of music here does not sound like it is what you would enjoy, I still highly recommend checking it out as this is a high quality production that is guaranteed to please.

Phenonena - OCS - 1991



62%

Lots of Synthesisers and electric drums with some occasional slap bass makes up this music disk, sounding like it stepped out of a time machine from the 80s. While I understand this disk is from the early 90s so the music may not be of same quality as those produced later, I can't help but feel the quality here ranges from average to slightly below par.

The opening tune with pan flutes I have heard before and is quite good, with the introduction credits timed nicely to the song giving this music disk a strong start, however from there it slowly slips away from been wonderful to been very average. While the piano keys light up with the music and EQ display look good, I feel there is some missed opportunity to have some small info about the music track displayed on the LCD screen which remains blank. Again, it looks nice, but nothing all that special.

If you like some of the earlier and more 'raw' sounding music modules of past, then you will probably find something you will like here, however the music on dedicated music disk needs to be extremely special since they are the main attraction, and with only a couple of musical pieces here that sound good, it is hard to find myself ever returning to have another listen through.

Musicland Brainstorm – OCS - 1993

Musicland does not bring anything new in terms of musical flair or style, with the songs sounding like any that you would find on a demo scene disk. That is not to say it is a bad thing, as they are good quality with lots of nice synth lines blaring over drum machine sounds from your home synthesiser. Combine this with lots of electronic bleeps and moody chords, and you come up with some enjoyable tunes, if not all that memorable.

But Musicland has a couple of tricks up its sleeve. It has a very moody opening credits leading smoothly into the main screen which presents some paged text (a nice change to scroll text). A neat little semi circle bar also slowly shrinks as the song plays so you know how long the song is and also when the song has looped. In addition, there is a small picture at the top which is different for each song. When selecting the song info you get to see the full size image, and each song has a little story behind it which the picture generally relates to, which makes it a little more interesting than the usual song title and file size.

Musicland is not going to set the world on fire for tunes that will stick in your mind or make you gasp with audible pleasure, but if you like your music disks with a little more personality, then Musicland makes for a nice change.







76%



Musicland 2

Brainstorm – OCS - 1993

Continuing on from Musicland, their second music disc retains some of the charm from the first including its small stories around each tune, individual artwork and useful semi circle music timer. Unfortunately some of the original's introduction flow is lost, however the overall quality gets a boost.

While the first song I listened to lowered my spirits expecting another music disk full of typical synth lines that filled the original compilation, I was pleasantly surprised to find the music style varies somewhat this time, with styles including some funky guitar strumming to mellowed pan flutes to chill to.

Again I would not call these stand out examples of Amiga music, but I definitely like the music direction they were heading in with this compilation, with a good mix of styles while retaining some of the originals charm.



Seduction

Complex – AGA - 2006

Seduction lives up to its title by having full frontal nudity in your face as it loads, with a tasteful piece of artwork followed by some stylish designed opening credits. This unique style carries over into the main music selection screen with squiggly drawn song titles melded into one screen, with an equally squiggly looking mouse pointer to select each song. Heck, even the scroll text looks all funky!

All this style is not lost on the music with the songs all feeling almost traditional demo scene style while having a funky and squiggly edge! The tunes included are mostly down tempo, and very much like the slow and chilled tunes you will hear at the end of a big demo scene production to bring you back down from the hype induced aggressive beats. I like to think of it as the Sunday morning chill out sessions!

While I was a little thrown when I selected the next song and thought it was the same song just in a different key, most of the songs here have a similar feel but are different enough to give some pleasant variety. Clean and smooth sounding instruments are used throughout the production. Unfortunately there is not really any song information or other screens to browse through, with only the scroll text giving you some information (right click for different scroll texts), but even then some of the information is simply "its 230k.. not sure what else to say.." which is a little disappointing. That said though, this is a great music disk, and I really enjoy leaving this one running in the back ground on my PC while going about daily life.



Turmoil Sanity – OCS - 1991

Let's get the one issue I have with Turmoil out of the way first. Turmoil seems to be struggling from an identity crisis, unsure of itself whether it is a scene demo full of effects, or a music disk. For some time I thought I had got it wrong and downloaded a scene demo disk as it all starts off with zoom and rotate effects, bouncing balls, demo scene logo effects with scroll text. It is only when you reach what they call the 'end part' that you actually reach the music disk section!

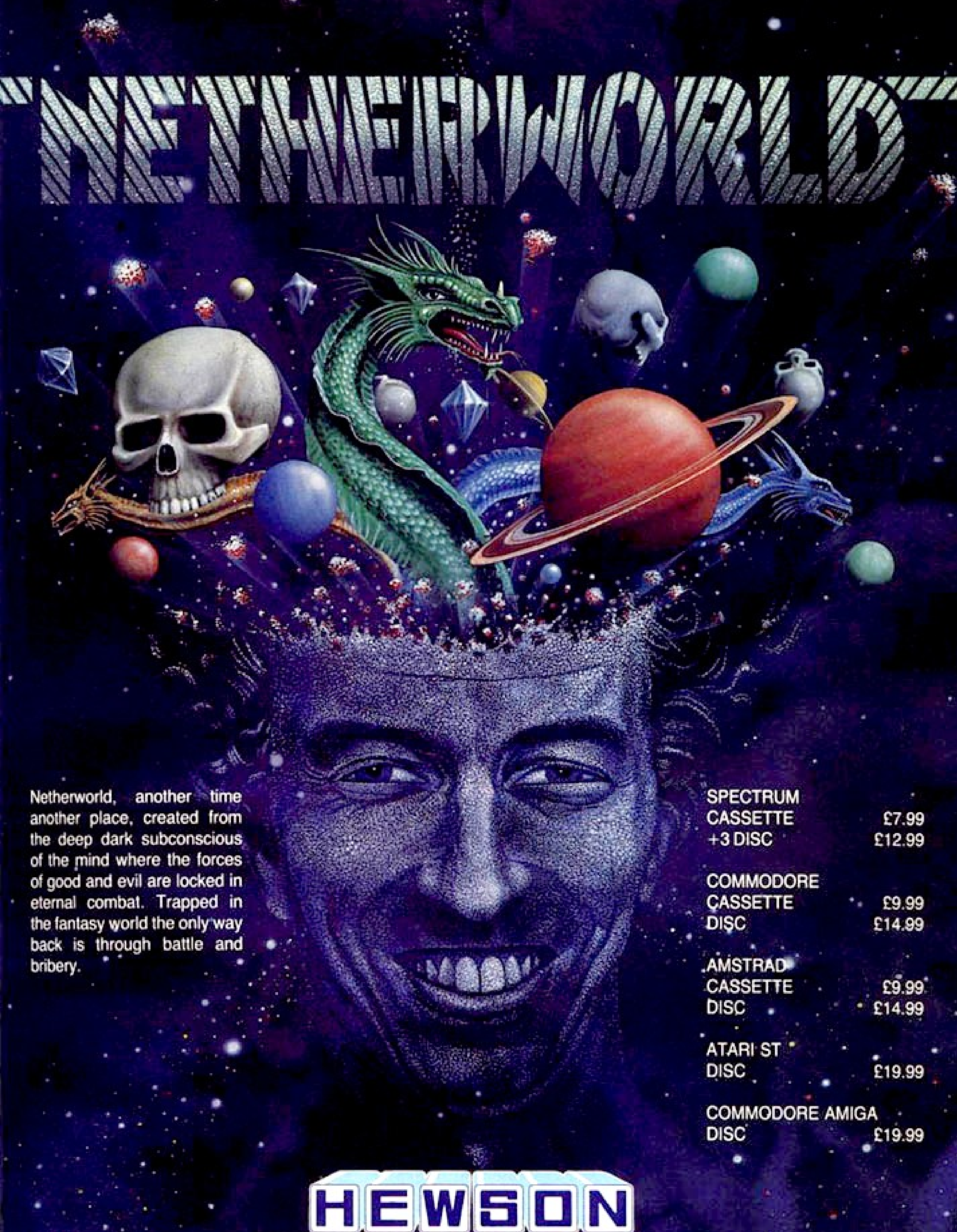
The first part also uses a lot of routines and graphics from Sanity's other great demo disks, including the awesome 'World of Commodore', however where that manages to be truly great, this only feels like a reheated 'ho hum' average demo.

All is not lost though because when you get to the music side things pick up somewhat. There are not a lot of songs to select and they mostly feel a little old skool with a lot of electronic sounding brass band instruments, but they all have really good melodies that you find yourself humming along to. They have a nice full sound, if a bit of an 80s vibe going on. One of the songs 'Mourning' is very mellow 'synth orchestral' song dedicated to a friend who lost his life in an accident, and I am really happy they did not cheapen the emotional piece with any electronic backing drums, instead opting to stay with the melody which invokes the feeling intended.

The visual equaliser is also really nice and I found myself becoming hypnotised by its pulsating plasma visual display. Half scene demo, half music disk, Turmoil does not quite fit fully into either category. I wish they had concentrated more on the music side and included more songs as this part of the disk is really good.

79%




NETHERWORLD
Netherworld, another time another place, created from the deep dark subconscious of the mind where the forces of good and evil are locked in eternal combat. Trapped in the fantasy world the only way back is through battle and bribery.
SPECTRUM
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HEWSON

880 cheat!

Captain Kirk shares some of his favourite cheats

Elite

A big game deserves a big cheat! So here we go!

Enter **SARA** or **SUZANNE** when prompted for a word from the manual during the copy protection check. Then, enter a valid word when the prompt appears again. Press **[Keypad Plus]** and/or **[Keypad Asterisk]** during game play to display the cheat screen. A prompt for a byte and new value will appear. Enter the first number of the set, press **[Enter]**, enter the second number, press **[Enter]**, then press **[Esc]** to resume game play. Note: Press **[Help]** to edit the amount of arms and cargo. Additionally, this will not work in the Space Legends compilation version of the game.

Effect	Byte / Value	Effect	Byte / Value	Effect	Byte / Value
Create a new galaxy	**12/00-FF**	Create a new galaxy	**13/00-FF**	Extra credits	**18/FF**
7 light years fuel	**1F/46**	Escape capsule	**20/01**	Large cargo bay	**23/02**
ECM system; press **L**	**24/01**	Pulse laser	**26/01**	Beam Laser	**28/01**
Escape pod	**2C/01**	Energy bomb	**2F/01**	ECM jammer	**31/01**
Naval energy unit	**31/0C**	Docking computer	**32/01**	Galactic hyperdrive	**34/03**
Mining laser	**36/01**	Military laser	**38/01**	Cloaking; press **Y**	**3F/01**
Food	**40/01**	Textiles	**47/01**	Radioactives	**49/01**
Slaves	**4C/01**	Wine	**50/01**	Narcotics	**54/01**
Computers	**5C/01**	Machinery	**63/01**	Alloys	**67/01**
Firearms	**69/01**	Furs	**6C/01**	Minerals	**72/01**
Gold	**75/01**	Platinum	**79/01**	Gem stones	**83/01**
Alien items	**84/01**	Refugees	**88/01**	Thargoid doc	**8C/01**
Clean legal status	**91/00**	Harmless	**97/00-08**	Loads of combat	**98/FF**
Seek & destroy	**9D/01**	Deliver Thargoid Docs	**9D/02**	Rescue Refugees	**9D/03**
Destroy Cougar	**9D/04**	Destroy Space Station	**9D/04**		

Final Fight

Is the Mad Gear gang getting you mad? Wipe them out completely with this little cheat!

During the introduction, when Hagar is asked to switch on his TV, Press **[HELP]** five times to switch the cheat on. You will be invincible and pressing the following will also provide more support :

[PLUS] - No Mad Gear gangster

0 – 9 - Level select



Frontier – Elite II

Make some quick easy space cash with the following sneaky loop hole.

Purchase an extra passenger cabin, obtain a passenger, then try to sell your ship. Your offer will be refused, but your money will increased each time you try to sell.



880 talk back!

Fresh from our rusty old spider infested letter box....

If you post this Ill buy you a coffee. brill mag, I have A600 and Amiga forever also have Amiga CD32.
Keep up the good work.
Mark Read, Notts UK

Make it a triple decaf latte made from organic coffee beans grown on the International Space Station, with skim double froth milk from the rare Ankole cow and Antarctic grown triple refined sugar, served in a paper cup made from the rare Jubo Jubo tree found in the deep Amazon rain forest.....
Actually, any instant cheap coffee will do the trick! If its brown and has caffeine in it, I will drink it!
A600 was a cool little machine, and I hope to come into possession of one soon. I am extremely jealous about the CD32, that was a thing of my dreams back when it came out!

Holy shit! Kipper2K reads your magazine... and emails you! Take a bow :)

Holy crap! Freaking amazing! Thanks... I think?! Either way, I am HYPED!

I just noticed that your magazines, disks, and disk labels have a variety of naming methodologies in the zips. It'd be good to make them consistent :)
Derek

The reason for this is we are all normally half drunk while we work feverishly on 880 Gamer. Hey, you would too if you had our psycho editor for your boss! We will however try to sober up enough to get some sort of consistency going.

Hey Mark,
You should consider slapping together a flyer or ad for 880Gamer to include in the next Reset issue, which is due out in a month or so. Apart from that, nice issue as usual and always a fun read! Happy to see the mag still going (I know from personal experience how much work it is!). Hope you enjoyed the trip to China.. I suspect there aren't too many Amigas over there.
Kevin (Unkle K/Reset)

Here is another free plug for the great C64 Mag, Reset! If anyone has downloaded issue 7, look out for our advert for 880 Gamer inside! Congrats on your latest issue K, it's cool how Elite is in both of our magazines at the same time to celebrate its birthday! As for Amiga's in China, there are actually heaps! The government learnt a long time ago how powerful the Amiga is, and now use it for all their high end espionage hacking of other countries. Because of it's great multitasking, they can hack multiple countries at once all from an A500 (with a 512k expansion of course!).
Keep up the great work over at Reset, your last issue was solid as always and actually full of lots of useful and well researched information, unlike the drivel we write here on the back of beer coasters while we are down the pub!

Do you have a Twitter account by a chance? Wonder if I can subscribe for updates without refreshing the webpage once a week or month ;)
Marcin

I have enough trouble keeping up with my own life without investing a second life in all the social media like Facebook and Twitter, so I am sorry to say I have neither of those. But rest assured, anyone who emails me at 880 Gamer will be added to a mailing list, which I will always email out to let you all know when the latest issue is out, so you can stop wearing out your left mouse buttons from continuously hitting the refresh button.

Hello! I have downloaded your 6 issues and am having problems with the #1 coverdisk (the only one I've unzipped so far). The first time I ran it, I got the Wiz & Liz demo, but now when I run the disk I only get a top scrolling car game similar to River Raid. I have Amiga Forever 2014 installed. I can not find a way to get Wiz & Liz back, or any other files on the coverdisk. Can you please tell me what I'm doing wrong, or what I need to do differently? I'd really appreciate it!
Forrest

Let me channel my days from working as a Systems Officer... you have to follow my instructions very very carefully ok? Firstly, is it plugged in and turned on? If so :
Step 1 – Turn it off
Step 2 – Turn it on again!
And just like that it is fixed! Yes, I know, I am a god of I.T.
P.S. For those wondering, we did already work this out, I am not that bad a person! =P

Since we were introduced to the Amiga as kids and now have kids of our own, I've been thinking of using the Amiga to help my daughter learn at school. www.gamescoffer.co.uk has an education section that I'm currently going through and there are titles for maths, history, drawing, typing and more. Mixed in with a bit of Lemmings we are enjoying it very much.

But, I'm interested in what you find most fun and most challenging in producing this magazine? The Nebulus article had a great background and as a one man effort I imagine it gets challenging at times but it looks like a labour of love also.
Jarlath

This all sounds a bit too much like educational and intelligent software to me... I think you have the wrong magazine for that! =)
Seriously though, having kids of my own, I am starting to look around for educational titles, and getting them started on the Amiga sounds like a super idea. If

880 talk back!

anyone is also looking for educational Amiga software, Jarlath has also started doing some video reviews at www.dailymotion.com/amigatoday
Go and check them out!
As for the most challenging thing about making this magazine? You have pretty much nailed it right here.... Kids! Having 2 young ones aged 2 and 4, it is very much attention city 24 hours a day, and then when I do finally get a moments peace along comes the wife looking for attention! Not that I am complaining! But having the time to actually do any work on the magazine is by far the biggest challenge! Heck, this issue was finished a month ago and just needed some minor tweaking... should only take an hour or two. One month later...
And the most fun part? Pretty much everything. I love playing games so this gives me a good excuse to revisit them, and making up the magazine I actually enjoy a lot. The biggest kick I get out of it though is getting everyone's feedback and emails like yours. It's great to talk with people from all around the world from all walks of life and age groups, all brought together by a common interest in an old computer. So I guess thanks to you, and everyone else who writes in! Your emails are the fuel that keeps 880 Gamer going! Thanks!

I'd like to see a future issue review just games that either never got reviewed in the first place, or only have one review on HOL. Stuff like summer games, some of the budget stuff like Belial etc…
Codetapper

Hmmm... the team at 880 Gamer are always trying to think up ways to be lazier, and having our valued readers pick the games for us sounds like a great idea! We do less work, you get what you want, it's a win-win situation! So since a few people have asked for us to review a certain game or from their own collection, we now present.....

Reader Review Request!

or...

880–RRR

Ok, we will try to think of a better slogan by the next issue, but either way, here is the deal. You tell us what game you would like us to review, and we will! Simple as that! Each issue we will select one title (by random), but do not freak out if your game does not make it in as we will add it to our list and try to get it in the following issue! Is there any prize for this I hear you ask? Not really. I will probably just take a game you love so very much, pick it apart, complain, and slap a really poor score on it, making you so angry you will stop reading 880 Gamer for 6 months, only to return and find you have not missed any issues because of the blistering speed we pump out these magazines!

For the first Reader Request Review, I will be taking Codetapper's request to play the following game :



So what are you waiting for? Send in your requests, or just send us an email to say hi! Either way, just write to us! We promise you wont regret it for at least 5 minutes!

880Gamer@gmail.com
Thanks to everyone for your comments and support!





The scrolly text shout out bit...

I would like to acknowledge the following people / groups / software / sites for making 880 Gamer possible :

Codetapper – For putting up with my terrible spelling and grammar by helping out with proofreading this issue.
Ubuntu – 880 and emulation is run on Ubuntu, along with use of the Ubuntu font used within 880 Gamer
FS-UAE – A big thanks to Frode Solheim and the UAE team for bringing great Amiga emulation to Ubuntu
WHDLoad - Bert Jahn's masterpiece, making disk swap-less dreams come true
The GIMP / Fotowall – All image manipulation powered by the gimp and his full leather suit, with awesome help also from Fotowall!
LibreOffice – 880 is fully written up and saved in PDF using LibreOffice Writer .. and its free just like 880 Gamer!
Lemon Amiga – Thanks for their wonderful website where some information is gathered.
EAB – For helping spread the word of 880 Magazine, and good sports when finding one of many errors in each issue!
ADA – Both to the Amiga Demo Archive site and all of those that keep the scene alive and pumping to this day!
HOL / Amiga Magazine Rack– Some Cover disk ADF files and information gathered from these wonderful sites
The Amiga – An eternal thanks to Jay Miner and the amazing Amiga team that built this great machine

Finally, some of you may remember my disappointment when our countries government changed, bringing with it a backwards change to our much needed national broadband network roll-out (NBN). Some days ago we all cheered with joy when our then Prime Ministers government overthrew him, outing Tony Abbott (There is a god after all!), replacing him with Malcolm Turnbull. Before politics, Malcolm played a role helping shape Australia's internet and is far from a stupid man like our previous leader, so this is a plea to our new PM to put politics and 'Liberal vs Labour' behind him, and do what is right for the country. Recommence the original FTTP plan instead of the current outdated and 'she'll be right patch up fix' currently on offer. Move Australia forward out of Abbott's 1950s dream. Do this, and I may even end up voting for you! Of course, Malcolm will never see this, and I am dreaming, but I just wanted to get this off my chest without turning this magazine into a political piece. Hence why it's stuck out the back here. OK, I will shut up now and back to playing games!



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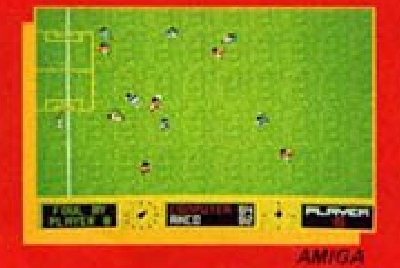
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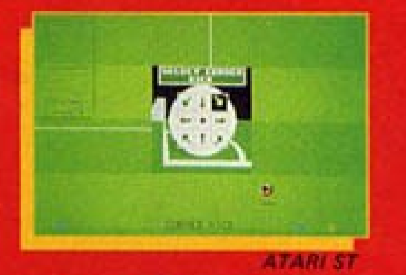
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